THE FABLES OF ESOP, IN ENGLISH.

With all his life and fortune, how hee was subtill, wise and borne in Greece, not farre from Troy the great, in a Towne named *Amonio*. He was of all other men most deformed and euill shapen: for he had a great Head, a large Visage, long lawes, sharpe Eyes, a short Necke, crooke backed, great belly, great legges, large feete. And yet that which was worse, he was dumbe, and could not speak. But notwithstanding this, *he had a singuler wit, and was very ingenious and subtile in cauillations, and pleasant in words after he came to his speech.*

whereunto is added the Fables of Auian: *and also* the Fables of *Alfonce*, with the Fables of *Poge* the Florentine, very pleasant to be reade.

¶ Imprinted at *London* for *Andrew Hebb*, dwelling at the Bell in Paules Church yeard.
1634.

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This Historie maketh mention, how Esop excused himselfe before his Lord, for eating of the Figges.

And forasmuch as his Lord to whom Esop was bound, supposed that he was not profitable hee sent him to labour in the fields, and to digge and delue in the earth. And on a day, as his Lord walked in the fields, one of his labourers gathered figs, and presented them vnto him, saying, My Lord, take these Figs as for the first fruit of thy field. And the Lord retened them ioyfully, and deliuered them to his seruant Agapotus, charging him to keepe them till he returned from his baine. And it hapned, that Esop comming from his labour, demanded his dinner, like as he was accustomed; and Agapotus which kept the figges ate of them, & said to one of his fellowes, If I did not doubt and feare my master, I would eat all these figs. And his fellow said, if thou wilt let me eat with thee, I shall finde a craft that we shall haue neither blame ne harme therefore. How may ỹ be said Agapotus? To whom his fellow said, when my Lord shall come home, we will say to him, that Esop hath eaten them. And because he cannot speake, he shall not excuse himselfe, & therefore he shall be well beaten. And hereupon they went and ate the figs betwæne them both, saying, this villaine shall bee well beaten. And when their Lord came home, hee commanded Agapotus to bring him the figs: and Agapotus said vnto him, Sir, when Esop came from his labour from the field, he found the celler open, and went in without reason, and hath eate all the figges. And when the Lord

heard this, he was much angry, and said: call to me Esop, to whom he said, thou counterfeit charle, how is this happed, that thou hast not been affraid to eat my figges? whereof Esop was affraid, and beheld them that had accused him. And the Lord commanded to take off his clothes and let him be beaten, but he kneeled downe at the Lords feet, and by signes (because he could not speake) prayed his Lord to giue him space to excuse him: his Lord granted it to him. And anon after, he toke a vessell full of hot water, which was on the fire, and powred the same into a bason, and dranke thereof. And anon after hee put his finger into his mouth, and cast vp all that was in his stomack, which was onely water, for that day hee had tasted nothing but water: and he prayed that his accusers might semblably drinke of the water as he had done. And so they did, and held their hand before their mouthes because they would not vomit. But because the water was hot, and their stomackes resolued by the water, they vomited vp the water, and the figgs together. And when the Lord saw it, he said to them, Why haue ye lied to me against this Esop which cannot speake? and then he commanded to spoile them, and beat them openly, saying: Whosoeuer doth, or layeth wrong vpon other, shall be punished with the same paine that is due therefore. And these things seene & experimented, Esop returned againe to his labour. And as he laboured in the field there came a priest named Isidis, which went toward the citie and had lost his way. And hee seeing Esop, prayed him that hee would shew him the right way to the Citie. And Esop receiued him ioyfully, and made him to sit downe vnder a figge tree,

and

and ſet before him bread, hearbes, figges and Dates, and made ſignes to him to eat, and drew water of a pit, and gaue him to drinke. And when hée had well eaten hée tooke him by the hand, and ſet him in the right way for to goe to the Citie. After which things done, the Prieſt lift up his hand to heauen making his prayers to the gods for Eſop, of whom he receiued ſo good refreſhing.

How the Goddeſſe of Hoſpitalitie gaue ſpeech of tongue to Eſop, and how he was ſold.

When Eſop returned to his labour, and after when he had well laboured for to eſchew ỹ great heate of the Sun after this ſtage (he went into the ſhadow for to reſt and ſléepe vnder a trée. And when the Goddeſſe of Hoſpitalitie appeared vnto him, and gaue him Sapience and Ability, alſo ſhe gaue to him the gift of ſpéech, for to ſpeake diuers fables and inuentions, as to him which was right deuoute to hoſpitalitie. And after when Eſop was awaked, he began to ſay to himſelfe; I haue not onely ſlept, but ſweetly reſted, but alſo I haue had a faire dreame, & without any impeachment, I ſpeake, & all that I ſee I call by their proper names: as an horſe, an oxe, a chariot, and to all other things, I can giue to euery one his name. For I haue receiued ſuddenly the grace of this knowledge, for the great pitty that I haue had on them which lacked hoſpitalitie; for he that doth well, ought to haue good hope in God, that he ſhall haue good reward therefore, and therefore I ſhall not labour leſſe than I did before. And thus when Eſop began to labour, there came he ỹ had the charge of the field, and the ouer-ſight. & anon he be-

gan to beat one of the labourers grieuously, whereat Esop was greatly displeased, & said to him in this maner: Why beatest thou him for nought? and euery houre thou comest & beatest vs without any cause, thou killest vs and doest nought thy selfe. But I shall tell to my Lord all this matter like as thou shalt well know of it. And when the Procurator heard him called by his owne name Zenas, he marueiled that Esop spake and thought in himselfe, I shall goe before my Lord, to the end that this foule villaine complaine not of me, and that my Lord put not me from my place. And he tooke his mule, and rode vnto the citie, & came to his Lord, and said, My Lord, I humbly salute you. And the Lord loked on him and said, why commest thou so affraid and troubled? And Zenas said vnto him, that now in ỹ field is hapned a thing monstrous What is that said the Lord? haue the trees brought forth their fruit before their time, or haue the beasts brought forth their fruit against nature? And Zenas answered him: nay my Lord, but the crooked churle, the counterfeited Esop beginneth to speake clearely. Truly said his Lord, this indeed is a thing that to me seemeth monsterous: yea forsoth, said Zenas. Then said the Lord, we se daily many men when they bee angry cannot speake, but when they be in peace, can well speake, and proffer things. And then Zenas said, my Lord, hee can speake aboue all other, & hath said to me things contumelious, blasphemous, and villainous, of thee and all thy gods. Whereat his Lord was very angry, and said, Goe thou to the field, and what wilt thou doe with him, doe it, sell him, or giue him, or lose him, for I giue him to thee. And then

Zenas

Zenas toke his gift by writing, and came againe into the field, and said to Esop, now thou art mine, and in my power, for my Lord hath giuen thee to me, and because thou art a villaine and an euill churle, I shall sell thee vtterly. And then it fortuned that a Merchant that had bought seruants came into the field to buy beasts, for to beare ouer his merchandize to Ephesus the which met with Zenas, and he saluted him, and demanded of him if he had any beasts to sell. And Zenas answered, that for nothing he should finde no beasts to sell, but I haue a seruant which is not faire, and he is of a good age, which if thou wilt thou shalt buy. And the Merchant said, he would first see him. And then Zenas called Esop and shewed him to the Merchant. And when the Merchant saw him so foule and deformed, he said in this manner: From whence is this villaine come, and this trumpet of Tragetentus? this is a faire merchandize, for if he had not a voice, I should take him for a bottle full of wind: yet be well occupied to bring me hither to shew me this faire personage, I supposed thou wouldest haue sold to me a comely seruant, honest and pleasant. And then the Merchant returned on his way, & Esop followed him saying in this manner. Abide a little here, & the Merchant said, hinder me not villain, for thou maiest haue no profit of me: for if I bought thee, I should be called the Merchant of fooles, and of vaine things. And then Esop said vnto him, Wherefore art thou then come hither? and the Merchant answered him, to buy some thing that is faire and comely, but thou art foule, deformed, loathsome, and counterfeited: Wherefore I meane to haue no whit at all to doe

with such merchandize. And then Esop said, if thou wilt buy me, thou shalt lese nothing. And the Merchant demanded wherein maiest thou doe me any profit: then Esop said: Be there not in thy house little children, ne in the towne that cry and run: buy mee and thou shalt doe wisely, and shalt be their Maister, for they shall dread & feare me like a false visage. And then the Merchant smiled at the words of Esop, and returned back to Zenas asking him how he would sell that faire merchandize. Zenas said unto him, give me thirty pound or three halfe pence for him: for I wot well that no man will buy him: and then ỳ Merchant paid for him as much as he was well content with, and Esop went with his master into his country. And as he entred into the house he saw two children lying in the lap of their mother: then said Esop to the Merchant, Now shalt thou have experience of that I have promised, for since these two little children have séne me, they have bén still and afeard. And then the Merchant laughing, bade him to enter, and he séing his fellows faire and pleasant, saluted them saying: I salute you my faire fellowes. Now when they saw Esop they said all, we shall have anon a faire personage, what will our master doe to buy such a man, so foule & so deformed? And their Lord answered, because that I have found no beasts to helpe you, therefore I have bought this gallant, to helpe you to beare your carriage, wherefore depart among you the fardels for to beare. And Esop said to them, O my good fellowes ye se well that I am the least and feeblest, I pray you therefore to give me the lightest burthen: and his fellowes said to him, because thou maiest beare nothing:

To

To whom Eſop ſaid, becauſe ye doe all the labour, it is not meet that I onely ſhould be idle, and vnprofitable to my Lord.

How Eſop demanded the lighter burthen, but to the ſeeming he tooke the heauieſt, which was at laſt the lighteſt, and ſo he beguiled his fellowes.

THen his fellowes ſaid to him thus, which wilt thou beare? And Eſop beholding all the burthens, fardles, packs, and paniars, toke a panier full of bread, which two of the bearers were ready to haue borne and ſaid: let me haue this panier to beare. Then they ſaid he was the moſt foole of thē, becauſe he might haue choſen the lighteſt, and took the heauieſt. But he toke the panier of bread, and went forth before all his fellowes: which when his fellowes beheld and ſaw, they all ſaid that their maſter had not loſt his money for he was ſtrong, and might beare yet a heauier burthen; & thus they mocked him, but alwaies Eſop was at his lodging before his fellows. And when they were arriued at their lodging, their maſter made them to reſt, & commanded Eſop to bring forth bread to eate, and ſo he toke bread out of his panier, that his panier was halfe emptie. And when they had well eaten, each of them toke his burthen, and Eſop bore leſſe than he did, and came to his lodging before his fellowes, and at ſupper he gaue ſo much bread, that his pannier was all empty. And on the next day he took his panier, and went ſo faſt before his fellowes that they knew him not, ſo that one demanded, Who is he that goeth ſo farre before vs? and another ſaid,

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it is the croke-backed and counterfeited Churle which by his subtiltie hath deceiued vs that bare the burthens not consumed by the way, but he hath auoided his burden, & is more wily than we be. And when they came to Ephesus, the merchant led his merchandize to the market, and also his three seruants to sell, which were named Garmaticus, Saltis, and Esop: and a merchant said to him, if thou wilt sell thy seruants at a reasonable price, there is a Philosopher named Exantus, to whom much people goe to learne at a place called Somnon, leade thy seruants thither, and the philosopher will buy them: and the merchant did well aray Garmaticus & Saltis with new robes, and led them thither for to sell: but because Esop was so foule & lothsome, he was clad in canuas, and was set between the other two which were faire, pleasant, and well fauoured men; but all they that beheld Esop, were abashed because of his deformitie, saying: From whence commeth this fellow? and because they so wondred at him, he loked all ouerthwartly on them boldly.

Of the second sale of Esop.

And when the market day came, Exantus the Philosopher departed out of his house, and went to and fro throughout the market, and he saw these two young men, and Esop standing betweene them, whereat he marueled greatly for what cause the merchant had so sorted them, and approaching to one of them, he said in this manner, Of what country art thou? and he answered, I am of Cappadoce. And Exantus demanded of him, saying: what canst thou doe? And he answered, I can doe all things that thou wilt: which answer when Esop heard, he laughed

laughed, shewing his great teth: and all the scholers that were there with Exantus beholding Esop so sore laughing, and shewing his great teth, they thought they saw a monster and not a man, and said to their fellowes, this great whoreson hath very big teth. And some asked what they had seene, and they said, that he sore laughed, and shewed them his teth, and some said he laughed not, but that he was a cold on his teth: and one of them demanded wherefore he laughed, calling him gentle gallant: and he said what hast thou to doe therewith knaue? goe thy way: and that scholar departed all ashamed, following his Master. And then Exantus demanded the price of Saltis: & the Merchant said that he should pay for him a thousand pence: and Exantus esteeming the price ouer deare, returned to the other fellow, and said to him, Of whence art thou? and he said, of Lido; and Exantus asked of him: what canst thou doe? and he said, I can doe all that thou wœnest: and when Esop heard these words, hee laughed more than he did before. And when the scholars saw him laugh againe, they said: this fellow laugheth at all things. Then Exantus demanded the price of Garmaticus, and the Merchant said three Mcrownes, which Exantus thought too deare, & went his way. Then the scholars said to their Master, These seruants please thee not: yes, said Exantus, they please mee well, but it is ordained in our City, that no seruant should be bought at so high a price, vpon a great paine. And one of the scholars said: seeing they that be faire cannot be bought, buy him that is foule and deformed, truly he shall doe thee some seruice, and the price that he shall be sold for, we our selues will pay.

And

And Exantus said to them; If I should buy this villaine that is so foule and uncleane, my wife would not be well pleased, for she is so curious, that shee may not suffer her selfe to be serued of such a counterfeited seruant. And then the scholars said, Master thou doest many things, with which thy wife shall not gainesay nor meddle. Then Exantus said to them, Let us then demand of him what he can doe, lest for default of asking we should lose our money. Then Exantus turned him to Esop and said, God saue thee young man: and Esop said to him in this manner, I pray thee grieue me not. Then Exantus said to Esop, I salute you. So doe I thee, said Esop. Well, leaue these mocks, said Exantus, and answer me that I shall demand: and he asked, what art thou? and Esop answered, I am of flesh and bone. Then Exantus said, I demand not that, but where wast thou borne? and Esop answered, In the wombe of my mother: and Exantus said, yet I aske not that of thee, but I aske of thee in what place thou wert borne: and Esop said, my mother neuer told nor assured me, whether she was deliuered of me in the chamber or in the hall. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me what thou canst doe? Esop said, nothing. Exantus said: What canst thou doe nothing? Esop said, no. Wherefore, said Exantus? Because said Esop, my fellowes say they can doe all things, and then will they leaue nothing for me to doe. Then the scholars were much abashed, and had great maruell at him, saying: This fellow answereth by diuine wisedome, for there is none to be found that can doe all things, & therefore he laughed. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me if thou wilt

that

that I shall buy thee: and Esop said, That is in thee, no man shall constraine thee thereto: nevertheless, if thou wilt buy me, open thy purse, and tell the money, and make the bargaine. Then the scholars sware by all the gods, this fellow exceedeth our Master. Then Exantus said to him in this manner, If I buy thee, wilt thou not runne away? Then Esop answered, if thou thinke that I will runne away, I counsell thee not to buy mee. Surely, said Exantus, thou saiest well, but thou art very loathsome and deformed. To whom Esop said, Men ought not onely to behold the face of a man, but rather regard the courage. Then Exantus demanded of the Merchant, what shal I pay for this Esop? And the Merchant said to him, thou art a foolish Merchant to leave these faire and goodly servants, and to take him that can doe nothing, take one of these two, and let this Asse goe: and Exantus said, I require thee to tell me what I shall pay. Then the Merchant said three score pence. Then the Scholars told out the money to the Merchant, and thus by this bargaine, Esop became servant unto Exantus. And when the banquers received the money for the sale of Esop, they demanded curiously who were the buyer and seller. Then Exantus and the Merchant compounded and accorded betweene them, that hee had not bin sold for so much money. But Esop said to the Banquers, this is he that hath bought mee, and this is he that hath sold mee, which thing they will deny, wherefore I affirme and say, that I am free. Then the Banquers laughed at this cauillation, and went and received the price of Exantus, for as much as he had bought Esop.

How

How Exantus brought Esop home to his wife.

THen when euery man was departed, Esop followed Exantus home to his house, and when he came before his house, he said to Esop, abide here awhile before the gate, vntill I goe in for to praise thée to my Lady and Mistresse my wife. Well sir, said Esop: and then Exantus enter into his house, and said to his wife, Dame, ye shall no more haue cause to bée at debate with me, for ye haue desired me long for to get you a faire seruant, wherefore now I haue bought one that is so wise, and so pleasant, that thou neuer sawest one better. And when two of the Ladies seruants heard him say so, wéening that it had bin truth, they began to striue together, & the one began to say to the other, My Lord hath bought for me a faire husband: and the other said: This night haue I dreamed that I was married: and thus his seruants talked. But his wife said, my Lord, where is the faire fellow that ye praise so much? I pray you let me see him: and Exantus said, he is before the gate. And his wife said, I pray you bring him in: and as the two young women had debate for him, one of them thought in her selfe, I shall sée him first, and if I may, he shal be my Husband, and so thée issued out of the house, and said: where is this faire young man ý I desire to sée? and Esop said to her, what demandest thou? I am hée. And when she saw Esop, she was abashed, and said unto him, Art thou the faire Peacocke? where is thy taile? And Esop said to her againe, If thou

haue

haue néde of a taile, thou ſhalt not faſe of one. And then as he would haue gon in, the ſeruant ſaid vnto him, Come not here; for all that ſhall ſée thée will runne away. And after ſhe went in, and told her fellow what he was: and when ſhe came out, and ſaw him ſo deformed, ſhe ſaid, beware thou knaue that thou touch me not: and when Eſop entred into the houſe, anon he was preſented to the Lady: and when the Lady ſaw him, anon ſhe turned to Exantus and ſaid: inſtead of a ſeruant thou haſt brought a monſter, throw him out: and Exantus ſaid to her, My wife, thou oughteſt to be glad and ioyful, becauſe I haue brought to thée ſo faire and ſo good a ſeruant: and ſhe ſaid to Exantus, Now wot I wel that thou loueſt me not, for thou deſireſt to haue another wife, and becauſe thou durſt not tell it me, thou haſt brought me this foule great knaue, to the intent that I goe from thée: I wil no longer abide, for thou knoweſt well that I may not ſuffer him, and therefore deliuer me my dowrie, and I ſhal go my way. And thē Exantus ſaid to Eſop, when we were on the way thou ſpakeſt largely, & now thou ſaieſt nothing: and Eſop ſaid to him, becauſe thy wife is ſo malicious, put her in priſon. Exantus ſaid, Hold thy peace, elſe ſhalt thou be beaten, ſéeſt thou not that I loue her more than my ſelfe: then ſaid Eſop, I pray thee that thou loue her well: and ſhe ſaid, wherefore not: Then Eſop ſmote his fote on the pauement, and cryed out with a loud voice, ſaying: Harke, this Philoſopher Exantus is ouercome of a woman: and then Eſop turned him to his Lady, and ſaid to her: Madame, I pray you take not my words at the worſt. Thou wouldeſt haue a ſeruant that were yong,

well

well formed, well arraied, strong & rich, to serue thée at thy dinner and beare thee to thy bed, that can rub and claw thy feet, and not such a foule man and so deformed a seruant as I am: for if thou hadst such a one, thou wouldest set nought by thy husband, & therefore Erupus the Philosopher, had his mouth of God, which neuer lyed. He said that there were many perils and torments on the Sea, and other great riuers, and also pouerty is a hard thing, & difficult to be borne and also there be many other great dangers, and troubles infinite: but there is no worse danger nor perill than a false woman. And therefore Madam, I pray you y you take no more a faire seruant nor pleasant to serue thée lest therby thou dishonor thy Lord and husband. Then she said to Esop auoide hence thou villaine, which art not onely deformed of thy bodie, but also of thy words: but I shall goe my way. Then said Exantus to Esop, Thou seest how thou hast angred my Wife, se thou please her; and Esop said, it is no small thing to please the ire of a woman, but a great thing. Exantus said to Esop speake no more, for I haue bought thee to make peace, and not to make debate and strife.

How Exantus brought Esop into a Garden.

EXantus bade Esop take a panier, and follow him into the Garden. And Exantus said to the Gardiner, Giue vs of thy hearbes: and the gardiner cut of the hearbs in diuers places, and deliuered them to Esop, and he toke them, and Exantus payed for them: and when he was departing, the gardiner said to him, Master, I pray thee that thou wilt assoile me a question: Well said Exantus, aske what thou wilt: and the Gardiner demanded of him, saying:

ing ; Master, what is the cause that the hearbs that be not laboured, grow faster and sooner, than they that be curiously laboured ? This question answered Exantus, that they came by some prouidence by which the things were brought forth. When Esop heard this answer, he began to laugh. And Exantus said to him ; Thou villaine, laughest thou me to scorne ? and Esop said, I mocke thee not, but him that hath learn'd thee thy Philosophy. What solution hast thou made ? What is that that commeth of Diuine Prouidence ? A child of the kitchin will make as good an answer. Exantus then said to Esop, make thou then a better solution. Esop said vnto him, If thou command me, I shall gladly. Exantus said vnto him ; It appertaineth not to him that iudgeth things of difficulty, to iudge rude things and rusticall, but I haue a seruant here which shall informe and giue the solution of thy question, if thou wilt request him. And the Gardner replyed. Can this villaine palliard that is so greatly deformed, answer to this question ? Then the Gardner said to Esop, hast thou knowledge of such things ? And Esop said ; Yea truely, more than all the men in the world. For thou requirest wherefore the hearbs that bee not laboured, grow sooner than they that bee sowne and laboured ? Esop replied, Take heed to my answer : for as a woman that hath bin a widow, and hath had children by her first husband that is dead, and after was married to another man, which hath had children of another Wife before : and vnto the children of her first husband, she is a mother, and to the other children she is but a step-mother. Thus there is a difference betweene her owne children, and that

other womans. For her children she hath nourished peaceably, and the other children in anger and wrath. In this manner it is of the earth; for she is mother of the hearbs that grow without labour, and is but stepmother to the hearbs ỹ doe grow by labour and force said the Gardiner then, thou hast eased me of much study; therefore I pray thee take of the hearbs that be in my garden at all times, and when you list.

How Esop did beare the Present.

ON a time, when the scholars had beene in the auditory with Exantus, one of the scholars dressed precious meats for the supper of Exantus and other: and when they were at supper Exantus toke of the best meats, and put them in a platter, and said to Esop, Goe beare this to her that loues me best. And Esop thought in himselfe; Now is it time to auenge me best on my Mistris. And when he came home into the Hall, he said unto his Mistris: Madame, beware that yée eat not of this meat. And his Lady said, I wot well alwaies that thou art a great fole. Esop said to her, Exantus hath not commanded me to giue it to thée, but to her that loueth him best.

Then Esop presented the platter to a little hound, which was alwaies in the house, saying to her: My Lord hath sent to thee this precious meat. Then the wife of Exantus went into her chamber, and began to weepe. And Esop returned to Exantus, and hee asked him, how his loue fared: he said, Right well; and all the meat that I haue set before her, shee hath eaten it. And Exantus sayd, what said she? and he said, My Lord she sayth nothing, but she desireth to see thee. When they had well eaten and drunke, one

asked

ſhed when mortall men ſhall haue moſt to doe? Eſop ſaid, that ſhall be at the day of iudgement. The ſcholars hearing this, ſaid: this villaine is full of anſwers and nothing ſaid. Why goeth the ſhœpe to his death following his maſter, and ſaying nothing, and when the ſwine is brought to be ſlaine, he doth both cry and braye? And Eſop anſwered and ſaid: becauſe it is accuſtomed to milke and ſhare ſhœpe, and hœ wœneth, that hœ ſhall be forthwith either milked or ſhorne, and therefore feareth not at all: But becauſe the ſwine is not accuſtomed to be milked or ſhorne but to be ſlaine bloud and to loſe his life, therefore he dreadeth when he is taken. And all the ſchollars ſaid it is troth: Loe this man is wiſe, and hath ſaid well. Then each man aroſe and went his way.

And when Exantus was returned home to his houſe, he entred into his chamber, and found his wife ſore wœping, and he ſaid vnto her: my ſwœt loue how is it with you? and kiſſed her, and ſhe turned her backe to him, and ſaid, let me alone, I haue not to doe with thee, I will goe from thee for thou loueſt better thy hound than me, to whom thou haſt ſent thy precious meate. And becauſe he knew nothing thereof, he demanded, what meate hath Eſop brought to thee? And ſhe ſaid, none at all. Exantus ſaid, I am not drunke, I ſent to thee by Eſop a platterfull of precious meate, and ſhe ſaid: not to me, but to thy hound. Then he called Eſop and demanded of him to whom haſt thou giuen the meat I deliuered to thee? and he ſaid, to her that loueth thee beſt, like as thou commandeſt me. And Exantus ſaid to his wife, vnderſtandeſt thou not what he ſaith? I vnderſtand

him well, said she, but he gaue to me nothing, but gaue it to thy hound. Then Exantus turned to Esop and said to him: thou great villaine, to whom hast thou borne the meat I deliuered vnto thee? Esop answered, to her that loued thee best. And Exantus demandeth who was she? And Esop called the little hounde, and said: this is she, for the loue of thy wife is right nought, for if she be a little angry, incontinent she reproueth thee, & speaketh violently to thee that loueth her, and will say, I will goe from thee, and leau thy house: & if this hound goe from thee, call her again and she commeth anon, making thee cheere, and therfore thou oughtest to say to thy wife: and not to her that loueth thee best. Then Exantus said to his wife, thou seest this fellow is a railer and an inuenter of words and therefore haue patience, for I shall finde cause to auenge thee, and beate him. And she said, doe what thou wilt, for I shall neuer haue more to do with him, and after that thy hound for I goe my way: and without saying farewell, shee went home to her frinds. And Exantus was angry & sorrowfull for her departing: and Esop said to him, Now seest thou well that thy wife that is gone loueth thee not, but this little hound abideth by thee. Exantus all heauie for his wiues departing, prayed her to returne, but it auailed not: for the more a woman is prayed, the more is she obstinate and will doe the contrary.

How Esop, made his Ladie to come home againe.

And because Exantus was angry for the departing of his wife, Esop said to him, Master, be

not

not angry, for without praying I shall make her returne and come again unbidden. So that thee shall be more lowly, meeke, and obedient to your commandements than euer she was before. And then Esop went to the market, and bought capons and many other pullen, and as he bare them, passing by the house where his mistresse was, it happened that one of the seruants of the house came out. And Esop demanded of him, Haue yee sent nothing to the wedding of my Lord? To what wedding, said the seruant? Unto the wedding of Exantus said Esop, for to morrow he shall wed a wife. And anon the seruant went into the house & said to Exantus wife: Madam there be new tidings; What be they said she? Exantus shall haue a wife and be married. & forthwith incontinent she departed and came home to the house of Exantus crying. Now know I well the troth, & wherefore thou madest this great villains to anger me because thou wouldest take another wife, but I shall keepe thee well therefore, for as long as I liue shall neuer woman come here, Exantus be thou sure. Then was Exantus ioyfull for to haue againe his wife, and gaue Esop great thankes.

How Exantus sent Esop to the market, to buy the best meat he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues.

And a little while after, Exantus had his scholars to dinner with him, and said vnto Esop, goe anon to the market, and buy vs of the best meate thou canst finde. And Esop went to the market and thought in himselfe, now shall I shew that I am no foole, but wise. And when Esop came to the market

he bought the tongues, of Swine and Oxen, and dight them with Vineger, and set them on the table, and the scholars, said to Exantus, Thy dinner is full of Philosophie. And Exantus said to Esop, bring us our meate, and Esop brought them more tongues arraied in another manner that is to wit, with Garlick and Onions. Then said the Scholars these tongues be well dight, for one differeth from another and Exantus had Esop bring other meat, and Esop brought yet forth tongues. Then were the scholars angry, and said: wilt thou alwaies give us tongues? And Exantus all angry in his courage, said to Esop, what other meate hast thou prepared for us? and Esop said none other. Then Exantus said to Esop thou great headed villaine, said I not to thee that thou shouldest buy of the best meat that thou couldest finde? so I see I, said Esop, and thanked be God that here is a Philosopher, for I would faine know of the Philosopher what is better than a tongue: for certainly, all Art, all doctrine and all Philosophie, be notified by the tongue, without which there could be no joy or company among men for by it the lawes are declared, by it the good rectifie praise, the euill reproues, the sorrowfull comfort, the foolish instruction the wise men knowledge, and finally the greatest part of the life of mortall men is in the tongue, and therefore there is nothing better than the tongues nor nothing more profitable unto men. Then said the Scholars, thou doest wrong to bee angry, for Esop saith right well. And after all these words, they rose from the Table: and on the morrow after, Exantus excusing himselfe in their counsaile, desired them to come againe to supper, and they should

should haue other fare. And Exantus said to Esop in the presence of them that were there, goe to the market, & buy the worse meat that thou canst finde, for all my friends shall sup here with me. So Esop without troubling of himselfe, went into the butchery and bought againe tongues, and dight them as he did before, and when they came to supper, he serued them with tongues as he did before. And the scholars said, Be we come againe to the tongues? And because the scholars were not pleased, Exantus said to Esop, thou art a great headed villaine, said I not to thée thou shouldest buy the worst meat that thou couldest find? So haue I done said Esop, for what is worse or more venimous than an euill tongue? By the tongue men perish, by the tongue they fall into pouerty, by the tongue cities are destroyed, by the tongue commeth much harme. Then said one of them, that sate at the table, Exantus if thou set thy minde vpon this fole, he will bring thée out of thy wit, for hée sheweth well by his fashions that he is vnwise: and like as he is deformed of his body, so is he of his conditions. And Esop said to him, thou art a make-bate, for thou makest strife betwixt the Master and the seruant, and weenest thou to be more curious than other? And Exantus for to finde cause to beat Esop, said, ah great headed villaine, because thou callest the Philosopher curious, goe get me a man that careth for nothing, that is to say, one that is nothing curious nor diligent.

How Esop went out and found one that cared for nothing.

ESop departed and went out of the place, beholding here and there, if hee could finde any man

that was not curious nor cared for nothing: he went abroad and espied a great villaine sitting on a blocke, wagging his legs and whistling with his mouth, to whom Esop said, My Lord desireth thee to come and dine with him; which anon rose, without saying any word, and entered into the house with Esop, and not saying God speed you, sate downe at the table. And Exantus said to Esop, what man is this? Esop said, a man that careth for nothing. Then Exantus said unto his wife secretly, to the intent that we may avenge us on Esop and beate him well, saire love doe that I bid you. Then he said aloud, dame put water in a bason and wash this pilgrimes feet, for he thought the villaine would not have suffered it, but to have refused it for shame, and then should she have had cause to have beaten Esop. Then the Lady tooke water & put it in a bason, and began to wash the villaines feet. And howbeit that she was his Lady: yet this villaine thought, this Lord will doe me some worship, and suffered her to wash his feet, without saying any word. And Exantus said to his wife, dame give him drinke, And the villaine said to himselfe it is well worthy that I drinke first, and he tooke the pitcher and dranke as much as he might. And Exantus tooke the platter with the fish, and set before him. And the villaine retained no courtesie, but eat it every morsell. And Exantus said to the Cooke, this fish is not well dreſt. Then Exantus commanded the Cooke to bee beaten. And the villaine said to himselfe, this fish is well dight, and the Cooke is beaten without cause, but I care not, so that I may fill my belly, and I shall alway eat and say

nothing.

nothing. Exantus said unto ỳ Cooke bring in a Tart, and incontinent as a tart was brought, the villaine brake it in peeces, and without any words he began to eat thereof. And Exantus beholding him how he eat, called the Cooke and said, this tart is euill baked and hath no sauour. And the Cooke said, if I made it, it is well drest, and if it be none of mine the blame is not in me but in thy wife. Exantus said: Then and if my wife hath made it, I shall burne her alive, and bad his wife shee should not answer, because he would finde cause to beat Esop: and then said Exantus to one of his seruants, Goe fetch some wood e bushes to burne my wife: and this said he to see if the villaine would arise and saue her from burning; and the villaine said to himselfe, this man will burne his wife without cause. Then said he unto Exantus; Sir, if thou wilt burne thy wife, abid a little while, and I shall goe fetch my wife in the field, and burne them both together. Exantus hauing heard these words he marueiled much, and said: Verily this man careth for nothing. And then he said to Esop, thou hast vanquished mee. But now let it suffice thee from henceforth, if thou wilt serue mee truely, thou shalt sooner returne into thy liberty. Then Esop said unto him, I shall serue thee so now as thou wert neuer better serued. Now three daies after Exantus sayd to Esop, Goe and see if there bee much people in the Path, for if there be none, I will goe there and bathe mee: and as Esop went by the way, he met with the Iudge of the Citie; and because hee knew him, he said to Esop, whether goest thou great head? Esop said unto him, I wot not: because he wained he mocked him,

the

the Judge commanded him to prison: and as he was led, he said to the Judge: loe I said to thee well, that I will not whither I went, for I supposed thou wouldest not haue put me in prison. And the Judge began to smile, and said to them that led him: let him goe. And as Esop went to the baine, hee saw a great company of men which were there leaping, and there lay a stone at the entry doore, at which they stubled and hurt their feete, and there was one that entred in and stumbled thereon, and anon he tooke it away, because that there should no more be hurt thereat. After Esop returned home to his Master Exantus, and said that there was but one man in the baine: Exantus then said to Esop, take such things as bee needfull for vs and let us goe thither: and when they where come to the baine, he saw a great company, and said to Esop, now art thou worthy to bee beaten, for thou saidst to me there was but one man, and there be moe than a hundreth. And Esop said to him, there is but one man, and if thou wilt heare me, thou shalt say that I say troth: for that stone which thou seest at the entry of the bath, all that passed by stumbled at the stone, and none was so wise to take it away but this one man, and therefore I say, that there was no man but hee, for all the other are but children and ignorant. And Exantus said to him, thou hast well excused thee: and Exantus found no cause to beate Esop.

Of the answer that Esop made to his Master.

AFter that Exantus had washed him, hee went homeward, and as he went he purged his belly and eased him by the way, and Esop was beside with a paile

a pailefull of water. And Exantus said to Esop, wherfore is it, that when a man hath eased him, and purged his belly, he lookyth vpon the ordure therof? And Esop answered him, and said: There was in time past a Philosopher that oft purged his belly, and for feare that he should leese his science, euer looked and beheld if he voided it with his filth or ordure when he had purged his belly; and so euer after men looked when they purged their bellies what they voide, but thou oughtest not to dorbt therof, for thou hast no wit nor science to leese, for to a foolish demand belongeth a foolish answer. And on the morrow next following, as Exantus was set at the table with all his friends, holding a cup with wine in his hand, his hand shooke for feare of the questions that men asked him. And Esop said, Master, Dionysius saith, that good wine hath three vertues, the first is, voluptuousnesse, the second is gladnesse, and the third is that it maketh men soles and out of their wits, wherefore I pray the let vs drinke and make good cheere: and because that Exantus was then almost dronke (for he had well dronken) he said to Esop, Hold thy peace, for thou art a counsellor of hell, I shall auenge me on thy selfe.

How Exantus promised to drinke all the water in the Sea.

AND then one of the scollars, seeing that Exantus had dronke enough, and was charged with ouer-much wine, said vnto him, my master, I aske of thee, if a man may drinke the sea? Wherefore not, said Exantus? I my selfe shall drinke it well. Then said the Scholler againe, And if thou drinke

ſt not what wilt thou léſe ? and Exantus ſaid : My house, I am content ſaid the ſcholler, and againſt thee I will lay an hundred crownes on the bargaine ; and this done, each of them gaue their pledges, their ſignet of gold, & then went home. And on the morrow Exantus roſe out of his bed, and ſaw that he had loſt his ring off his finger, he ſaid to Esop. knowest thou not where my ring is? I know not ſaid Esop, but well I know for certaine, that this day we ſhall be put out of our house. And why ſaid Exantus? Esop ſaid to him remembrest thou not the bargaine that thou madeſt yeſterday at euen ? what bargaine, ſaid Exantus? Esop ſaid, that thou art bound to drinke all the ſea, and for gage haſt left thy ring of gold : and when Exantus heard theſe words, he was ſore abaſhed, and ſaid : in what manner ſhall I drinke all the ſea ? this may not be, for it is impoſſible: wherefore Esop I pray thee tel me, if it pleaſe thée, how I may vanquiſh or breake this bargaine. And Esop ſaid, thou ſhalt léſe, but perhappes I ſhall make that thou ſhalt well breake the bargaine. And the manner of it (ſaid Esop) is this that when thine aduerſary ſhall require thee to fulfill thy promiſe, thou ſhalt command ſeruants that they bring a table, and all ſuch other things as is neceſſary to be vpon the ſtrange of the ſea, and make the butlers and ſeruants there to abide with thee, and before all the companie thou ſhalt make a peece to be waſhed and filled full of the water of the ſea, and ſhalt take it in thy hand, and pray that the Bargaine may be declared before all the fellowſhip, and ſay thou wilt allure the promiſe as well before drinke as after ; and thus ſhalt thou ſay to all the fellowſhip,

ship, My Lords of Samie, ye know how yesterday at euen, I made promise to drink vp all the water in the sea. But all ye wot well how many great floods and riuers come and fall into the sea. Therefore I demand (and as reason is) that mine aduersary kepe and hold the riuers that they enter not into the sea, and then shall I drinke all the waters in the sea, and so the bargaine shall be broken and vndone.

How Exantus excused him from his promise by the counsell of Esop.

EXantus then knowing that the counsell of Esop was good, he was full glad. His aduersarie then came before Zenas, one of the city, to tell and shew the bargaine, & prayed the iudge that Exantus should doe that which he had promised to doe. And Exantus commanded all his seruants that they should beare his bed, and his table, and all other things that were necessary to him vpon the riuage of the sea. And then before al the company he made a peece to be washed, & filled it full of the water of the sea, which he took in his hand and said to his aduersary, declare wee now our bargaine: and Exantus then turned him toward the fellowship & said, my Lords of Samy, yee wot wel how many floods & riuers enter into the sea, & if my aduersary will hold them still so that they enter no more into the sea, then will I drinke all the water that is in the sea. And all they that were there began to say, Exantus saith wel. And the aduersary said to Exantus, my master, thou hast vanquished mee, wherefore I pray thee, that our bargaine may be broken. And Exantus said I am content: and when Exantus was turned home into his house, Esop did pray to him saying,

saying thus: My Master, because I haue holpen the at thy need, let me now goe at my liberty.

How Exantus found cause to beate Esop.

EXantus then cursed him, saying: great head, yet shalt thou not escape free nor go from me: go thou see and behold before the gate if thou canst espie two crowes together, & then come againe and tell me, for the sight of two crowes one nigh the other, is good fortune, but the sight of one alone is euill fortune. And as Esop went out of the house, he saw two crowes vpon a tree, wherefore he soone returned againe and told his Master. But as Exantus went out of the house, the one of them flew away, then said he ah great head where be the two Crowes that thou sawest? and Esop said, as I went to call thee, the one flew away. And Exantus said, ah thou croke-backed knaue, it is euer thus thy manner to mocke me: but thou shalt not thus scape scotfree, wherefore he commanded him to vndoe his clothes, that he might be beaten, and as the men were beating him, Exantus was called to dinner and then Esop said, alas, how much miserable am I, for I haue seene two crowes and yet am I beaten, and Exantus which saw but one is called to daintie fare: surely there is none to whom the birds be so contrary as to me. And when Exantus heard him, he much marueiled at the subtilty of his wit, and commanded to leaue beating him. And within a while after, Exantus said to Esop, Goe thou and buye vs some meate to our dinner, for all these Lords shall dine with me, and Esop went to the market and bought

bought all that he could buy, and when it was ready, he brought it into the Hall, where he found his Mistris lying on the bed sleeping: wherefore he awaked her and said: Madam, please it you, to take heed of this meat, that the doggs and cats eat it not, for I must goe into the kitchin againe: and she said to him: Goe thou where thou wilt, for my buttockes have eyes. And when Esop had made ready all the other meats, he brought them into the Hall, and found his mistris fast asleepe with her buttocks towards ŷ table; and because she said, that her buttocks had eyes, Esop toke vp her clothes, so as euery man might see her taile; and thus he left her sleeping.

How Exantus found his wife all discovered.

AND when Exantus and his Scholars came to Dinner, they perceiued his wife as shee was sleeping her buttocks all bare and naked. With great shame Exantus turned his face toward Esop, saying knaue, what is this? And Esop said: My Lord, as I did put the meat vpon the table, I prayed my Lady that shee would keepe it from the dogges, and she answered, that her buttocks had eyes; and because I found her sleeping, I discouered her buttocks, to the intent that her buttocks might the better see and looke about. Then Exantus replied unto him, ah thou shrewd and crooke backed villaine, oft hast thou serued mee such knauish trickes: What worse thing canst thou doe to me, than to mocke both me and my wife also? but the time will come that I shall make thee die an euill death. And within a while after,

Exantus

Exantus said to Esop: Looke well that no fooles enter into my house, but onely the Orators and Philosophers. Esop set himselfe beside the Gate, and as one of the Philosophers should have entred, Esop, began to grin and say, Come in thou dogge; and the Philosopher thinking hee had derided him, all wroth went his way: and thus did many other. But at the last, came there one that was very subtile, to whom Esop did as he had done to the other: and he that was wise, answered him swartly, and then Esop did let him enter into the house, and anon hee went againe to his Lord and said, No Philosopher is come to the gate, but this one: wherefore Exantus thought all the other had mocked him, and was very angry. On the morrow as they met with Exantus, they said to him thus; Exantus, thou mockedst us well yesterday: for he that kept the gate, cast on us a shrewd looke, and called us Dogs: for which cause Exantus was more troubled than hee was before. And anon he called Esop, and said to him; Goe thou crooke-backed counterfeited: and false churle, they whom thou shouldst have received with worship and great honour, those thou hast bitupered and mocked. Esop said unto him; Thou chargedst and commandst mee, that I should let none enter into thy house but wise Philosophers, And Exantus said; Ah false face, and crooke-backed knaue, be not these wise Philosophers? No certainly, replied Esop; for when I bade them enter into thy house, they entered not, and like fooles went their wayes againe, without saying any word: but this one answered wisely; and therefore I repute and allow him a sage and wise Philosopher, and the other

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as fooles, for a foole is he that taketh any light thing in anger. And then all the Samians and Philosophers that were there, approued the answer of Esop, and they marueiled much at his wisedome.

How Esop found a treasure, and how Exantus made him to be put in prison.

AND within a while after, as Exantus and Esop were together beholding the great sepulchers or tombes and the Epitaphs of ancient folke, Esop perceiued an arch that was nigh to a columne, vnto the which men went vnto by foure steps: thither he went, and without any consonants he saw letters written, after the manner following ABEOCTHCH. Then Esop called his master and said vnto him: My Lord, what betokeneth these Letters: Exantus looked and beheld them well, & knew not what they should signifie: wherefore he said to Esop, tell me what these letters signifie, and Esop said, My Lord, if I shew thee a faire treasure, what reward shall I haue of thee? Exantus said, Haue thou a good courage, for I shall giue thee freedome and libertie and halfe of the treasure: and anon Esop went downe the foure steps, & so deepe he delued at the foote of the columne, that he found the hidden treasure: which anon he brought vp to his Lord and sayd: My Lord, I pray thee that thou wilt doe vnto me as thou hast promised: and Exantus said to him, For euer thou hast liberty & freedome, thou must learne me how thou knowest this Science; for the vnderstanding thereof, shall bee more precious vnto me than to haue all the treasures: & Esop said, he that had this treasure, had specified it by the letters

which is here written in Latine, Ascende gradus istos quatuor, fodias & invenies Thesaurum auri.

Then Exantus told him: Sith thou art so subtile thou shalt not yet haue liberty: and Esop said unto him, Looke well what thou doest, for this treasure appertaineth to the king Dionysius. And Exantus asked of him how he knew that: and Esop said, by the Letters which signifie vnto vs: that thou giue vnto Dionysius the treasure which thou hast found. And when Exantus heard him say, that the treasure which he found was appertaining to the king Dionysius, he sayd thus; Esop, take thou the one halfe of this treasure, and let no man know of it. Esop then sayd vnto him, thou giuest it me not, but he that hid it here giueth it vnto me. And Exantus said, How knowest thou that? Esop answered, by the letters following, which signifie the same, to wit, E D Q I T A. The which letters signifie in Latine, Euntes dimitte quem inveniſtis Thesaurum auri. And then Exantus said: Goe we home, and there we shall part it.

How Exantus delivered Esop out of prison, and how Exantus promised him freedome and libertie.

After that Exantus was returned home againe he maruelled greatly at the wisedome of Esop, But for the libertie and freedome which he demanded, he was angry and dreading the tongue of Esop, made him to be put in prison. Then said Esop, this is a faire promise of a Philosopher. Thou wottest well how thou promisedst vnto me freedome and liberty.

liberty, but in stead thereof I am put into prison. When as Exantus heard him say so, he revoked and changed his sentence, and made him to be delivered, and after said unto him, If thou wilt be put to thy liberty, hold thy tongue in peace, & accuse me no more. And Esop said, Doe what thou wilt, for whether thou wilt or no, thou shalt shortly set me at liberty. That same time befell a marvelous thing within the Citie of Samie. For as men playd there the common and publike players, as yet they be accustomed to doe in many good cities, an Eagle suddenly flew thorough all the company of people, and toke and bare away with him, the Ring and seale of the soveraignty and puissance of all that Citie, and let it fall into the pit of a man who was not in liberty: for which deed and token all the people of Samie marvelled greatly, and there arose a great rumor in the City among the people. For much they were doubtfull of some persecution, and wist not what the thing might signifie, wherefore they were in great doubt and heavinesse.

Wherefore incontinent they came toward Exantus as unto him which they held for the most sage and wise man of the Citie of Samie, and demanded of him what this marvell signified, and also what was likely to fall thereby. Exantus was ignorant and knew not the signification of this marvell, whereupon hee demanded of the people time and space for to give hereupon an answer. Exantus then was in great heavinesse, because hee wist not what to say to this thing: and Esop seeing him so heavie and full of sorrow, said unto him, My Master, why art thou so heavy in thy countenance? leave sorrow and take

with thee ioy and gladnesse, giue me the charge to answer the Samians, and to morrow thou shalt say to them these words. My Lords of Samie, I am no Diuine, nor interpreter of the marueious things that be to come, neuertheleſſe, I haue a seruant in my house which (as he saith) can tell these things, if it please you, I shall make him come before you, and then by my counsell if I shall satisfie all the fellowship thou shalt therefore receiue and haue worship, glory and profit and if I cannot satisfie them, thou shalt be deliuered of great infamie and shame, and I shall be rebuked & put to great shame; then Exanes hauing his trust in the words of Esop, went on the morrow to the great place of Samy, and assembled there the people, & went vp on high whereas the Iudge was accustomed to sit: and as he had learned of his seruant Esop, so he declared there before the Samians. The which things when he had said, they prayed him that he would cause his seruant to come before them. And anon Esop came thither, and as he stood before all the company, all the people present looked and beheld him with great marueil, because he was deformed and crooked of body, and said, Looke, here is a faire person, able to be a sure diuine, and went and mocked him. And Esop being then on the highest part of all the place began to make a signe with his hand vnto all the people, to the end they should hold their peace and keep silence: and then he spake vnto them in this manner.

My Lords, for what cause laugh yee and scorne mee for my fortune? know yee not, that men must not looke in the face of a man, to see and behold of what figure or fortune he is of, but surely to know wise

dome? Also men ought not to take hēd of the vessell, for oft a foule vessell is full of good Wine. And when the Samians heard these words, they said to Esop, If thou canst giue vs good counsell for all the wealth of the common people, we all pray thee that thou wilt doe it.

And then Esop hauing confidence and trust in his wisedome, said thus: Fortune (which loueth diuention) hath this day set and put debate and strife betweene the Lord and the seruant; for he that shall vanquish, shall not be paid nor rewarded after his desert. For if the Lord get the victory. I that am his seruant shall get no libertie, as right requireth, but I shall be beaten and cursed, and imprisoned: wherefore if ye will that I giue a full solution of that ye demande, I aske and require you that ye doe make me free, and set me againe into my libertie to the intent that with trust, confidence, and audacitie, I may speake to you: and I promise and assure you, that I shall shew you (to your profit) the true signification and plaine vnderstanding of this great anger and signe.

And they all said with an equall voice, hee asketh a thing very resonable and iust, wherefore Exantus shall make him free, and giue him his liberty as reason is. Which thing when Exantus heard, he refused to doe. And the Lord of the authority publike, said vnto him. Exantus, If thou wilt not obey to the people, I shall by my owne authority, take him out of thy seruice, and shall set him at liberty, and make him equall with thee.

How Esop was restored vnto his liberty by the will of his Master.

AND because that Exantus was required of all his friends, that he should restore and put Esop into libertie, he said to Esop. albeit that it is not my good will, yet I giue thée liberty. And anon he that made the Proclamation, went into euery place where such Proclamation should be made, and proclaimed, Exantus had giuen frée liberty to Esop. And when this was done, Esop went into the midst of all the fellowship, and made a signe with his hand, that euery one should kéepe silence, and after said, My Lords of Samie, the Eagle which is king aboue all other birds, as the king is aboue the people, this bird hath taken away the effect and seale of your Gouernour: This betokeneth and signifieth, that a king shall aske and demand your libertie, and destroy your lawes. And when the Samians heard these words, they were abashed, and anon came the Pursuant with letters, and demanded after the signet of the Samians. The messenger was brought before the councell of the towne, to whom he presented his letters, containing the sentence following. Crassus king of Lindians to the Senate and common people of Samy greeting, and commanding you, that you doe to me obeysance, and pay mée tributes, which if you refuse to doe, I shall put you to death and burne your towne. Whereat the Samians were abashed, and for feare willing to obey vnto him. But neuertheless, first they went to Esop, and prayed him to say thereof his minde. The which said: My Lords of Samie, albeit that I would yé

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inclined to obey the king of Lindy, nevertheleſſe, to the intent that I may counſell you that which is needfull, & for the publike wealth and profit, I doe you to know, that Fortune in this mortall life doth ſhew two things, and two manner of wayes: The one is liberty, whereof the beginning is hard and difficult, but the end of it good and eaſie. The other part is ſeruitude, whereof the beginning is eaſie, but the end thereof is ſharp & bitter. And when the Samians heard theſe words, knowing that they tended to the good of the commonwealth, they conſented to take the aduice of Esop, and ſaid altogether, becauſe that we be in liberty, we will not be ſeruants vnto any man: and with this anſwer ſent againe the meſſenger to Craſſus. And when the king heard this anſwer, he was wroth and gathered all his men of war, and all the nobles of his realme, and prepared a great armie to deſtroy the Samians. The which thing he might haue brought about had not the meſſenger bin, which ſaid vnto him, Right deare Sir, thou maiſt not be auenged on the Samians ſo long as they haue Esop with them, which in all their affaires and deeds helpeth & counſelleth them; wherefore it is neceſſary that thou ſend an Embaſſador vnto the Samians, that they ſhall ſend thee Esop, and that thou wilt pardon & forgiue them their treſpaſſe, for if thou maiſt haue Esop, they of Samy be in thy hands. And the king ſuddenly ſent Embaſſadors to them of Samy, the which Embaſſadors applied and ſet their wits, to ſhew vnto the Senate of Samy the will of their Lord Craſſus: and ſaid that they ſhould ſend Esop ſpeedily vnto him: and when Esop vnderſtood what the king deman-

doo, hee said to the Samians, My Lords, it pleaseth me well to goe toward the king, but before I goe I will tell you a Fable.

How the Wolves sent their Embassadours to the sheepe.

IN time when beasts could speake, the Wolues made ware against the sheepe, and because the sheepe might not kepe them, nor hold against the Wolues, they demanded helpe of the Dogges, by the which the sheepe made the wolues to returne backward. And because the Wolues could nor might not get nor haue any prey, nor win nothing vpon the sheepe because of the dogs that kept them, the wolues on a time sent an Embassador vnto the sheepe, for to haue perpetuall peace with them: and for to haue peace, the wolues went and demanded, that for to eschew all suspition, the Dogs should be giuen to the Wolues, or else destroyed for euer. And the sheepe as fooles, in hope of peace and concord, consented to their demand. And when all the dogs were slaine, the wolues toke vengeance vpon the sheepe, as daily appeareth. When Esop rehearsed this fable, the Samians determined among themselues, that Esop should not goe toward the King.

How Esop obeyed not Samians, but went toward the King.

ESop obeyed not the will of the Samians, but went with the Embassadors towards the King And when he was come to the kings court, the King seeing that Esop was so deformed, and croked of body, he was angry and wroth with himselfe, and said with great maruell, Is this same he, for the trust of whom

whom they of Samy would not obey unto me? Esop then said: Ah right deare Sir and King, certainly I am not come before thy Maiestie by force, but of my good will I am come to thee, trusting so much upon thy benignity, that thou wilt heare what I shall say unto thee.

The King gaue him audience, & leaue to say what he would, and thus he began: The other day there was a man which chased the Flyes, the which man took a Nightingale, & the Nightingale seeing that he would haue killed her, said to the Falconer, I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me, for to no body doe I any harme or danger, for I eat not the corne, nor destroy the fruits of the earth, but giue solace and ioy to all them that goe by the way with my song and voice, and of me shalt thou haue but only a little carkasse: and when the Falconer heard the bird speake these words, he let her goe. Wherefore (right deare Sir) I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me, which am nought and nothing worth, for to no body I doe harme nor would I doe. And for the defect & feblenesse of my body, I may not doe, but I can speake and say things that be profitable to them that be in the mortall life of this present world. The king then marueiled and was moued to pittie, and said to Esop, I giue not to thee thy life, for fortune giueth it thee, & if thou wilt haue ought else of me, aske & it shall be giuen thee. Then Esop said, I aske nothing of thee but onely that thou giue me the tribute of the Samians. Well, said the King, I am content. Then Esop greatly thanked the king, and after that he composed y Fables which be written here in this booke,

and

and to the king he gaue them, and demanded of him the letters of the gift, for the remission of the tribute of the Samians, the which were deliuered to him by the kings commandement, and with his good will, and many other gifts: and Esop then tooke his leaue of the king, and returned to Samy.

How Esop returned to Samy againe.

After that Esop was arriued in Samy, the people receiued him worshipfully, and made great ioy at his comming. And Esop commanded the people to be assembled together at a certaine day in the place appointed. And when as Esop was set in the seat, he read vnto them the royall Letters of king Crassus, how he remitted & forgaue them the tributes. After this Esop departed from Samy, and would goe sport himselfe through many Regions, nations, and cities, giuing ensignments by histories and fables vnto mortall men. Amongst the rest he came to Babylon; and because he did shew there his wisedome, he was receiued and worshipfully feasted of Lycure king of Babylon. At that time the kings did send one to another playes and problematicks, and such other pleasant deuices for their disports: and hee which could not interpret them, sent tribute to him that sent them. And because that Esop could interpret them, he taught the king of Babylon the manner of it. After that hee composed many Fables, which the king of Babylon sent to other kings, and because they could not interpret them, they sent many tributes vnto him, whereby his whole realme was mightily enriched. After that, because Esop had no young children,

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he adopted a noble young child to be his sonne; the which he presented to the King, and he receiued him as if he had beene his owne sonne, which child was named Enus. This Enus within a little while after, medled with the chamberer of Esop, which he held for his wife, and often knew her bodily, and because he was greatly in doubt that Esop would auenge himselfe, hee accused Esop to the King of diuers crimes and high treason, he also composed false letters, shewing by them to the king, how Esop by fables which he sent here and there, had betraied him, and that he had conspired his death.

How the King commanded that Esop should be put to death, and how he was saued.

The king Licure beleeuing & giuing credit to the accusation made against Esop, was very wroth, and commanded Horope and his Seneschall that Esop should be put to death. But Horope seeing that his sentence was vniust, kept Esop secretly within a Sepulcher, and all his goods were giuen to his son which had accused him. Long after this Nactabanus king of Egypt, weening that Esop had certainely beene put to death according to the commandement, sent a prope sitton problematick to Lycure king of Babylon, which was as followeth. Nactabanus king of Egypt sendeth greeting vnto Lycure king of Babilon. Because I would edifie & build a tower the which shall not touch heauē nor earth, I pray thee send vnto me Masons to make vp the said tower: & this request being accomplished, I shall giue vnto thee the tenth tribute of all my

my lands and realmes. And when the King of Babylon heard this demand, he was greatly troubled and wroth, and thought how he might giue answer to this question. And when he had called all his sages, for to haue the solution thereof, and found none that could declare the same, the King was more angry than he was before. And for the great sorrow that he toke thereof he fell downe to the ground, and said: Alas, I am miserable, and haue lost the crowne of my realme. Cursed be hée, by whom I made Esop to bée put to death. And when Horope the Seneschall knew the great anguish and sorrow of the King: he said to him, Right deare sir, take no more sorrow in thy heart, but pardon and forgiue me, for I made not Esop to be put to death as thou commanded'st me: for wel I wist that yet thou shouldest haue neede of him: and doubting to displease thy Maiestie, since that day to this I haue kept him in a Sepulcher. When the King heard this he was very glad, and anon he rose from the ground where he lay, and went and embraced the Seneschall saying: if it be so that Esop may be found alive, during my life I shall be bound to thée, and therefore I pray thée if it be so, let him come to me quickly.

How Esop was brought before the King, and how the King commanded, that he should be put in his former office and dignity againe.

ESop being brought before the King, fell downe at the kings fæt. And when the King saw that Esop looked so pale and ill, hée had of him great pitty, and commanded that hee should bée taken vp and

and newly cloathed. And when Esop was vpon his fæt, he came before the King, and full meekely saluted him, and demanded of him the cause why he had bene put in prison. Then the King said, that his adopted sonne Enus had accused him: and the King commanded that Enus should be punished with such paine, as those deserue that deuise the death of their Fathers. But Esop prayed the King he would forgiue him. And when the King shewed Esop the question of the King of Egypt, and when Esop had sern the Letter, he said to the King, Write againe to the King of Egypt, & giue to him this answer: That after the winter shal bee passed and gone, thou shalt send vnto him workemen to build and make vp his Tower. And thus he sent Embassadors to the king of Egypt. After this the King made all the goods of Esop to bee restored vnto him, and he to be put in his first dignitie, giuing him full authoritie and might to punish his sonne after his owne will. But Esop benignly receiued againe into his house his adopted Son and sweetly chastised and corrected him, and said: My sonne, obserue you my commandements, and kepe them in thy memorie: For we giue well counsaile to other, but for our selues wee cannot take it: but because thou art an humane man thou must be subiect to Fortune: Therfore thou shalt first loue God, and kepe thy selfe from the wrath and anger of the King.

And because that thou art an humane man, haue thy care and solicitude on humane things, for GOD doth punish the wicked folke: also it is no good or heauenly thing to doe any bodie harme, but shew thy selfe cruell to those that are thine enemies, to

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the end that of them thou be not condemned: and to friends make ioyfull semblance and good chéere, to the end that thou maiest haue the more assurance of their helpe and good will; for thou oughtest to desire prosperitie and welfare to thy friends, and aduersity to all thine enemies. Thou maiest speak faire to thy wife, to the intent that she take not another man, because a woman is variable, and as men flatter and speak faire to her, she is lesse inclined to do any euill. Kéep thee well from the fellowship of the cruell man; for albeit that he haue good prosperitie, yet he is miserable. Stop thine eares, and hold well thy tongue from such talking, and haue no enuie at other mens goods, for enuie hindereth the enuious. Haue care and regard ouer thy family, and that thou maiest be loued like a Lord, haue shame in thy selfe to doe any thing against reason, and be negligente or retchles to leane euery day. Tell not thy counsell to thy wife, spend nor waste not thy goods wilfully, for better it is to a man to leane his goods after his death, than to be a begger in his life. Salute ioyfully such as thou méetest by the way. For the dogge maketh signe of ioy with his taile to such as he knoweth by the way. Mock no man, neuer hide thy wisedome, & all that thou borrowest giue it againe with good will: & those which thou maiest helpe, refuse not to doe good to. Kéep thée from euill company: shew to thy friends thy affaires and busines, and beware that thou doe nothing where of thou maiest repent thée afterward: and when aduersitie commeth, beare it patiently. Harbour them that be harbourlesse, cloath the naked. A good word appeaseth anger. Surely he is happie that may get

him

him a good friend: for nothing is so secretly kept, but one time or other it will come to light.

How Enus departed from Esop, and went and killed himselfe.

THus with many admonitions did Esop instruct his sonne, and Enus departed and said, that unjustly and without cause hee had accused Esop, for which he was full of heauines and sorrow, and went vp to the top of a high mountaine, and from thence cast himselfe downe to the bottome: and thus wilfully he brake his bones and killed himselfe, as hee had euer kept euill rule and misgouernance: for of an euill life commeth an euill end. After this, Esop commanded the Falconers that they should take foure young Eagles which were not yet fourth of their nest. And when Esop had them, hee accustomed them to eat their meat high and low, and each of them had to their féete two children fastened and bound: and as the children lift vpward, made their meat to come downeward, the young Eagles likewise followed up and downe to take their meat.

These things thus ordered, and Winter being gone and past. Esop tooke leaue of King Lycure, and with his Eagles and children went into Egypt, and when hee was come before the King, the King séeing Esop so deformed and crooke-backed, thought in himselfe that hee was but a beast, and that the King of Babylon mocked him and his person, for hee considered not that a foule vessell might bee full of good Wine. For men ought not onely to take héed of the vessell, but to that which is in it. Esop then presently knæled before the King, and right humbly saluted

saluted him: and the King sitting in his Maiestie, saluted him right graciously and benignly, saying in this manner: How likest thou me & mine? And Esop answered, Sir, thou seemest to me to be the Sunne, and thy men the beames thereof.

How Esop made solution to the King of Ægypt, upon the question which he sent to the King of Babylon.

The King hauing heard the answer of Esop, greatly maruelled that he was so subtill in his answers and said to him on this manner: Hast thou brought with thee all them that shall edifie and make up my Tower? I haue said Esop. But first thou must shew unto me the place whereas thou wilt haue it. The king then departed out of the place, and set Esop in a faire field, and said, Seest thou this faire field? it is the place where I should haue my tower. Esop then to each corner of this field laid an Eagle with two children. The children held the meat vpward in the ayre, & the Eagles began to flie after it. And then the children with an high voyce began to cry, saying: Bring vs now clay, stone, brick, wood, and tiles, and we shall build vp the Tower. And when the king saw this, he said to Esop, as by great admiration: What haue ye men in your land which haue wings? Esop said, yea we haue many such. Then said the king to Esop, Thou hast vanquished me by thy reasons & words. But I pray thee answer me vnto this question. I haue made mares to bee brought to me out of Græce, and they haue receiued and bare horses by the help of the horses of Babylon. And Esop then answered him,

Sir

Sir, to morrow I shall give you an answer vnto this question. And after that Esop was returned to his lodging, he said in this manner to his seruants: Loke that among you ye get me a great Cat, and the seruants accomplished the will of Esop. Then Esop openly before the folkes made the Cat to bee beaten with rods: and as the Egyptians saw this, they ran anon after the Cat to haue taken him, but they might not: which feate doone, the Egyptians went and told the King thereof. And anon the King commanded that Esop should be brought before his person. And when Esop was come, the King said vnto him: Come hither, what hast thou done? wottest thou not that the god that is adored and worshipped of vs, is of the figure and likenesse of a Cat? For certaine all the Egyptians worship and adore the Idol made after the forme and figure of a Cat, wherefore hast thou greatly offended. And Esop said thus to the King: Sir, this false and euill beast, on the night last past, offended against the King of Babylon, for this beast hath slaine a Cocke which he much loued, because he fought so strongly, and sung on the houres of the night. And the King said: Esop I should neuer haue thought that thou wouldest haue made so great a leasing before me. For it may not be that this Cat should haue gone and come in a night from hence to Babilon. And Esop smiling said to him, Sir, in such manner commeth and goeth to Babylon horses; which the mares brought out of Greece conceiued, and bare young horses. And the King hearing this, praised greatly the wisedome of Esop, and then the King made more of him, and

more worshipped him than he did before. And on the next morrow after, the King of Egypt made all the chiefest and greatest of his Philosophers, and wisest men in all the country to be called before him, the which hee informed of the great subtilty and wit of Esop, and commanded them to goe to Supper into his court with Esop. Then they being set at the table, one of them said thus to Esop, thou must pardon me, for hither am I sent to speake with thee: and Esop said, say what it pleaseth thee: and he said, It is Gods will no man should make any leasings. And after, another said vnto Esop, there is a great temple, in the which is a columne right great, the which columne beareth and sustaineth twelue Cities, and euery Citie is couered with xxx. great sailes, vpon the which two women be euer running. And Esop answered him in this manner: The small and little children in Babylon, know the solution of this question. For this temple whereof thou speakest is heauen, and the columne is the earth, the xii. Cities be the xii. moneths of the yeare, and the xxx. sailes be the daies of the months, and the two women which be euer running ouer these sailes, is the day and the night. Then said the King of Egypt to the Lords of his court, it is now right and reason, that I doe send gifts and tributes to the King of Babylon. And one of them said to the King: Sir, we must yet make to him another question, the which is this. What is that we neuer heard ne saw? And the King prayed Esop to giue solution to this question. And Esop went to his lodging, and fained to make an Obligation, on the which hee made to bee written this the

follow

followeth, I Nactabanus King of Egypt, make it knowe to all men, that I haue borrowed of King Lycure a thousand marke of gold, which I Nactabanus promised to pay to the said King Lycure within a certaine time, (which then was past:) this writing did Esop present on the morrow following to the King of Egypt, which greatly marvelled thereat, and said to the noblemen of his court that were there present: Haue you seene or euer heard say, that the King Lycure hath sent to me any money or other thing? and as the Lords sayd nay, Esop then said to them: If it be as ye say, then your question is assoyled, for now you heare and see that which you never heard nor saw. And then they of Egypt said, that King Lycure was happy and fortunate, to haue such a subiect and seruant as Esop was, and the King sent Esop againe vnto Babylon with great gifts, and tributes for the King of Babylon.

How Esop returned into Babylon, and how the King caused a statue or image of gold to be set vp in honour of him.

After Esop was come againe before the King of Babylon, hee rehearseth to him all hee had done in Egypt. Wherefore the King commanded, that in the worship of Esop, a Statue or Image of gold should bee set up in the publike or common place. Within a while after, Esop had great desire to goe into Greece, and asked leaue of the King to goe thither, whereof the King was sorrowfull, and Esop promised him, that he would returne into Babylon, and there he would liue and die with him: and

thus the King granted to him leaue. And as Esop trauelled through all the Cities of Greece with worship, he shewed his Sapience and Fables, in such wise that he got worship and glory, and was renowned through all the land of Greece. At the last he came into the Land of Delphi, which was the best province in all Greece. The Citizens then of the Citie of Delphi, by their enuie mocked and dishonored Esop, and Esop said unto them: My Lords, ye be like the wood which is carried on the Sea, for when men see it a farre off, being tossed with the waues, it seemes to be right great, but when men beneere, it appeareth but a small thing. Thus is it of you, for when I was farre from you, I weened that ye had béene the best of all the land, and now I know that ye be the worst. And when the Delphines heard these words, they held a councell together, and one of them said: Most wise Lord, ye know very well how that this man hath had great glory in all the Cities and places where he hath beene, wherefore if we take not heed to our selues, he will robbe us of our great authority, and destroy us. Then they imagined how and in what manner they might put him to death, but they durst not attempt it for the great company of strangers that were then within the Citie. Neuertheless, as they espied one of the seruants of Esop making the males and other geare ready to ride and depart thence; they went and tooke a cup of gold out of the temple of Apollo, and secretly put it into the male of Esop. Esop then being ignorant hereof, departed from Delphi. But ere he was farre, the traitors ran after, making great noyse and clamor.

clamour. And Esop said to them my Lords, why take ye me? And they sayd, ah theefe of celestiall ornaments, crook-backed and sacrilegious, wherefore hast thou despised and robbed the temple of Apollo?

How Esop was betrayed, and how he rehearsed to the Delphines the Fable of the Rat and the Frogge.

ESop hearing this, denied it. And forthwith they vnbound the male within the which they found the cup of gold: and they went and shewed it before the people. And Esop considering and seeing their malice and wickednesse, and knowing that hee could not escape, began to wéepe and to be sorrowfull for his fortune. And one of his friends, named Demas, séeing Esop thus wéeping, comforted him, saying thus: Haue good courage and reioyce thy selfe. And anon the Delphines went and concluded, that they (as a sacrileger worthy to receiue a villanous kind of death) should take Esop, and cause him to be led to the top of a high mountaine for to be throwne downe from thence head-long. When Esop knew their sentence, he rehearsed to them this Fable, for to withdraw them from their malice, saying, When peace was among all beasts, the Rat and the Frog loued much each other, and the Rat called the Frog to come to dine with her. The Rat said to the Frog, eat of the meat which pleaseth thée best. And when they had eaten enough, the Frog sayd to the Rat: Come with mée, and thou shalt fare well at thy supper: and to the end thou mayst the better passe the riuer, thou shalt binde thy selfe to my foote. The Rat

agreed, and anon the Frogge lept into the water, and drew the Rat after her. And as the Rat was neare drawned, he said to the Frogge, Wrongfully thou makest me to suffer death, but they that abide alive shall avenge this misdeed on thee. And as they were thus drawing, the one forward, and the other backward, a Kite seeing the debat and strife betweene them, take them both together and ate them. In like manner ye make me die wrongfully: but Babylon and Greece shall avenge me upon you. But yet for all this the Delphines would not let Esop goe, but instead of death they drew and pulled him shrewdly, and in the best manner that he could, he defended himselfe against them.

How Esop died miserably.

And as Esop was thus fighting against them, he escaped out of their hands, and fled into the Temple of Apollo, but all that profited him nothing, for by force and strength they drew him forth of the temple, and then they leadde him whereas they ment to put him to death. And Esop seeing himselfe so bitapered, said unto them: My Lords, dread you not your god Apollo? he shall avenge me on you. Notwithstanding, for all he could say, they brought him to the place where he should die: and seeing he could not escape from them, he began to them this Fable. There was a woman which had a daughter that was a virgin and a foole: the mother prayed oft to her gods, that they would give to her daughter wit and reason. Her daughter was once in the temple, and heard what she said in her prayers: and anon she went into the field, and saw a man which filled

led a sacke full of corne, she came and asked him what he did, and he said: faire daughter, I put wit into this sacke: and she said againe, alas my friend, I pray thee that thou wilt put some wit into my body, my mother shall pay thee well for thy labour. Then he toke her and put his wit into her belly, and toke her maiden-head from her: and full glad shee returned home to her mother and said to her, Mother, I have found a faire young man, which hath put wit into me: and her mother hearing these words, waxed full of sorrow, and said: My daughter, thou hast recouered all thy wit, but the wit which thou hadst thou hast lost. Likewise to them he rehearsed another Fable: There was a husbandman which from his youth to his old age had neuer béene in the fields, nor neuer came into any citie; he prayed his master that he might once see the citie, and they sent him in a cart which was drawne with Asses, and said to him, prick well the Asses, and they shall leade thee to the Citie: and after he had pricked them, there arose a great tempest wherewith the Asses were sore fouled, so that they left their way, and tooke another way, and drew the cart vpon a mountaine top, so that both he and the cart fell downe to the foot of the hill. And as he saw himselfe falling, he said to Iupiter on this manner, Ah Iupiter, If I offend thee, must I therefore die so miserably? I am more grieued at these foule and inutile asses by whom I must receiue death, than if they were faire and good horses. Euen so it fareth with me, for of good men and iust I should not be put to death, but of you which are euill. And as they were come to the place for to fall downe Esop,

he told them another fable in this manner. A certain man was enamoured of his daughter, whom by force he deuoured, and she said vnto her father, ah Father thou art an euill man that hast done to me such a shame, for rather I should haue suffered this crime of a hundred other men than of thee: semblably it is of mee, for I had rather suffer death of other men than of you. So they threw him down from the top of the hill and thus he died miserably.

How the Delphines sacrificed to their gods, edified a temple for to please them for the death of Esop.

AND after, when Esop was put to death, it fell that in their citie ran a great pestilence and famine, insomuch that they lost all their wits, and for this cause they sacrificed it to their god Apollo, to the end to please him for the death of Esop, and because that vniustly and wrongfully they put him to death, they made and edified a temple, and when the Princes and great Lords of Greece had tidings how the Delphines had put Esop to death, they came to Delph to punish them that had put Esop to death.

Thus endeth the life of Esop.

Here beginneth the Prologue of the first Booke.

ROmulus the sonne of Tiber of the Citie of Antique, greeting. Esop a man of Greece subtile and ingenious, teacheth in his Fables how men ought to gouerne themselues. And to the end that we might shew the life and customes of all manner of men, he inuiteth the Birds, the Trees,

Trees, and the beasts speaking: to the end that man may know wherefore the Fables were found: in the which he hath written the malice of euill people, and the arguments of Iupyobes. He teacheth also to be humble. And for to vse good words, and many other faire examples, rehearsed and declared hereafter. The which I Romulus haue translated out of Greeke into Latine, the which if you read, they shall sharpen thy wit, and giue the cause of ioy and mirth.

The First Fable of the Cocke and the precious stone.

AS a Cocke once did seeke his liuing in the dung hill, he found a precious stone, to whom the Cocke said, Ha faire stone and precious, thou art here in the filth; and if he that desireth thee had found thee as I haue done, he would haue taken thee vp and set thee in thy first estate, but I in vaine haue found thee, for nothing haue I to doe with thee, ne good I may doe to thee, ne thou to me. And this fable Esop propoketh to them that read this booke: for by the Cocke is vnderstood a foole, which careth no more for wisdome, than the Cocke did for the precious stone: and by this stone is vnderstood this booke.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

OF the innocent and of the shrew, Esop rehearseth this Fable. It was so that a lambe and a wolfe both had thirst, and went both to the riuer to drinke, the Wolfe dranke aboue, and the Lambe beneathe: and as the Wolfe saw the Lambe drinking, he said with

with a high voice, Knaue why hast thou troubled my water which I should now drinke of? Ah my Lord, saying your grace, the water commeth from you toward me. Then said the Wolfe, hast thou no shame ne dread to curse me? The Lambe said, My Lord by your leaue. Then said the Wolfe againe: It is not sixe wekes past since thy father did as much. And the Lambe said I was not then borne. And the Wolfe said againe: thou hast eaten my Father: the Lambe said I haue no teeth. Then said the Wolfe thou art well like thy father, and for this sinne and misdede thou shalt die. The Wolfe then toke the Lambe and ate him. This fable sheweth, that the euill man careth not by what manner he may rob and destroy the good and innocent man.

Of the Rat and the Frog.

NOw it was so that the Ratte went on Pilgrimage, and came by a River, and demanded helpe of the Frogge for to passe ouer, and then the Frog bound the Rats foote to her foote, and swam into the midst of the River, and as they were there, the Frog abode still, with an intent to drowne the Rat. In the meane while, a Kite perceiuing it, toke them both away. Wherefore that man that thinketh deceit, deceit shall come to him.

Of the Dog and the Sheepe.

OF quarrellers which euer bee seeking occasion to doe some harme to the good, Esop giueth vs this fable. There was sometimes a Dog which demanded of a Sheepe a loafe of bread, that hee had borrowed of him. The Sheepe answered, that he neuer borrowed any of him. The Dog made her to answer

swer it before a Iudge. And because the sheep denyed the dept, the dog brought with him false witnesse, to wit, the Wolfe, the Kite, and the Sparhawke. When the witnesses should be examined and heard, the Wolfe said to the Iudge, I am certaine and remember well, that ỹ dogge lent her a loafe of bread: the Kite said, she receiued it to present my person: and the Sparhawke said to the sheep why denyest thou that which thou hast taken and receiued? thus was the poore sheep vanquished. Wherefore the Iuge commanded her that she should pay the Dog, and to that end, she should doe away before winter her fleece of woll to pay the same. Thus was the poore sheepe despoiled. In such manner the euill and hungry people, by their great vnthankfulnesse, rob and spoile poore folkes.

Of the Dogge and the peece of flesh.

HE that coueteth other mens goods, hee oft loseth his owne, whereof Esop reherseth this Fable. In time past there was a dog which went ouer a bridge, and held in his mouth a peece of flesh, and as he passed ouer the bridge, he perceiued the shadow of his owne selfe, and of his peece of flesh within the water: and he weening that it had beene another peece of flesh, forthwith thought to haue taken it: and as he opened his mouth, the flesh fell into the water, and thus he lost it. Right so is it with many a one, for when they thinke to rob other, they leese that which they haue of their owne.

Of the Cow, the Goate, and the Sheepe.

IT is accounted for a common saying among men, that the seruant should not presume to eat any

plums

plums with his Lord. For to the poore it is not good to haue partage, and diuision with him which is rich and mighty, wherefore Esop rehearseth such a Fable. The cowe, the goate and the sheepe, went once a hunting, and tooke with them the Lion, & chased a Hart, and when they came to part it, the Lion said: My Lords, I let you to wit, that the first part is mine, because I am your Lord the second, because I am stronger than ye be: the third, because I ran more swiftly than ye did: and whosoeuer toucheth the fourth part, he shall be my mortall enemy. And thus he toke from them the Hart. Wherefore this fable sheweth that the poore should not keepe fellowship with the mighty, for he is neuer faithfull to the poore.

Of the Theefe and the Sunne.

NO man is changed by nature but an euill man may well haue a worse issue than himselfe. Esop hereof telleth vs a Fable. A theefe held the feast of his wedding, and his neighbours came where the feast was kept, and did worship to the theefe: and a wise man seeing that the neighbours of the theefe were ioyfull & glad, said to them, Ye make you & gladnesse of that whereof ye should weepe, take heed then to my words, and vnderstand your ioy. The Sunne would once be married, but all the nations of the world were against him, and prayed Iupiter that he should keepe the Sun from wedding. Then Iupiter demanded of them the cause why they would not haue him to bee married: one of them said to Iupiter, thou knowest well there is but one Sunne, and yet he burneth vs all, and if he be married and haue any children, they shall destroy all mankinde: there fore

for this fable sheweth, that we ought not to reioyce when we are in euill company.

Of the Wolfe and the Crane.

HE that doth any good to an euill man, sinneth as Esop saith, for of the good done to the euill, commeth no profit, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. A Wolfe ate and deuoured a sheepe, of whose bones he had on in his throate, which he could not get out and sore it grieued him. Wherefore the Wolfe prayed the Crane, that he would draw out of his throat the bone. And the Crane put downe his long neck into his throat, and drew out the bone, whereby the Wolfe was whole. Then the Crane demanded of him her reward. And ỳ Wolfe answered, thou art right vnkinde and canst no good, remembrest thou not what I might haue done to thée: for when thou haddest thy necke within my throat, if I would I might haue bit it off. By this fable it appeareth that no good comes from an euill body.

Of two Bitches, how one lodged the other in time of littering.

BE not hasty to giue credit to the tales of flatterers, for by sweet words they deceiue good people, whereof Esop telleth vs this fable. There was a Bitch vpon a time, which would faine litter and bee deliuered of her young ones, and came to the habitation of another Bitch, and prayed her by sweete words, that shée would lend her a place where shée might litter her young ones, And that other Bitch lent to her, her bed and her house, weening that shée had therein done well. And when the bitch had littered, the good bitch said to her, that it was time that

the

she should goe and depart out of her house; and then the other bitch and her young dog ran vpon her, and bit her, and cast her forth of her owne house. In this manner many a one for doing good hath hurt and damage.

Of the Man and the serpent.

There is no good gotten by helping an euill person for he that helpeth, such, shall surely be ill rewarded for his labour: and he that saueth a theefe from the gallowes prouideth an enemie for himselfe: wherfore to withstand such, Esop rehearseth to us this fable. There was sometime a man which found a Serpent within a Mine, and by reason of the great frost in the Winter, the Serpent was hard and almost dead for cold, wherefore the good man pitied her, and tooke her vp, and bare her into his house, and laid her before the fire, insomuch that she came againe to her former strength and vigour. And as soone as shee was thus reuiued, shee began to cry and hisse about the house, and to trouble the good-wife and her children. Wherefore the good-man would haue had her out of the house: but when he thought to haue taken her, shee sprung about his necke and had almost strangled him. Euen so it fareth with them that doe good to wicked people, for instead of loue and kindnesse they shall haue malice and enuy.

Of the Lion and the Asse.

Of them that mocke others. Esop rehearseth this fable. There was an Asse which met with a Lion, to whom hee said: My brother God saue thee; and the Lion shaked his head, and had great paine to with-hold his courage from deuouring the Asse.

Asse. But the Lion said to himselfe, It behoueth not the teeth of so noble a Lord as I am, to bite such a foule beast. For he that is wise must not hurt the foole, nor heed his words, but let him goe.

Of two Rats.

FArre better is it to liue in pouertie, than to liue richly being euer in danger: whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. There were two Rats, whereof one was great and fat, and held him in the celler of a rich man, and the other was poore and leane. On a day this great Rat went to sport him in the field, and mette by the way the leane Ratte, of the which he was receiued as well as he could into his poore caue or hole, and gaue him of such meat as he had. Then said the fat Rat, come thou with me, and I shall giue thee other meate. He went with him into the Towre, and both entred into the rich mans celler which was full of goods, and when they were there, the great Rat presented and gaue to the poore Rat diuers dantie meats, saying vnto him: Be merry and make good cheere; and as they were thus ioyfully eating, the butler came into the celler, and the great Rat ranne into his hole, but the poore Rat wist not whether to flee, but hid him behinde the doore with great feare and trembling, and the butler turned againe and saw him not. And when he was gone, the fat Rat came out of his hole, and called the leane Rat which was yet in feare, and said: Come hither and feare not to fill thy belly: but the poore Rat said, for very loue let me goe, for I had rather eat corne in the field and liue securely, than to eat dainty fare in such feare as thou doest here in this place. And

there,

therefore it is better to liue poorely and surely, than to liue richly, and without assurance.

Of the Eagle and the Fox.

THe puissant and mighty must doubt the feble, as Esop rehearseth to vs a fable. There was an Eagle which came where young Fores were & toke away one of them, and gaue it to his young Eagles to fede them with. The For went after him and prayed him to restore it againe: But the Eagle said, he would not, for he was ouer him Lord and master: Then the For full of subtiltie and malice, began to put together a great abundance of straw, and laid it vnder the tree where the Eagle and her young birds were, and kindled it with fire, and when the smoak and the flame began to rise vpward, the Eagle fearing the death of his young birds, restored to the For her youg one.

Of the Eagle and the Rauen.

HE that is well and surely garnished, yet by false counsell may be betrayed, as Esop telleth vs such a fable. An Eagle was sometime vpon a tree which held in his bill a nut which he could not breake: the Rauen came vnto him and said, thou shalt neuer breake it vntill thou flie as high as thou canst, and then let it fall vpon the stones; and the Eagle did so, and by that meanes lost his Nut. Thus many haue bene deceiued through false counsell.

Of the Rauen and the Fox.

THey that be glad and ioyfull at the praising of flatterers, oft times doe repent them, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs this Fable. A Rauen which was vpon a tree, held in his bill a peece of cheese, which

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the Fox desired much to haue: wherefore he went and praised him in this manner, O gentle Rauen, thou art the gentlest of all other birds, for thy feathers be so faire so bright, and shining, and canst also well sing; if thou hadst thy voice cleere, and small, thou wouldest be the most happy of all other birds. The fowle which heard the flattering words of the Fox, began to open his bill for to sing, and then the cheese fell to the ground, and the Fox tooke it vpandate it. And when the Rauen saw that for his owne glory he was deceiued, hee wared heauy and sorrowfull, and it repented him that he had beleeued the Fox. Wherefore this fable teacheth us, that we aught not to bee glad or reioyce in the words of false and vnfaithfull folke, not to beleeue flatterers.

Of the Lion, the wild Bore, the Bull and the Asse.

When a man hath lost his dignity or office, hee must leaue his audacity or hardnesse, to the end that hee bee not hurt and mocked. Wherefore Esop sheweth such a fable. There was a Lion which in his youth was very fierce and cruell, and when he was come to age, there came to him a wild Bore, which with his teeth rent and burst a great peece of his body, and auenged the wrong that the Lion had done to him before time. After came unto him a Bull, which smit and hurt him with his hornes: also an Asse, came, which swote him in the forehead with her feet in most scornefull manner. And then the Lion began to weepe, saying within himselfe in this manner: When I was young and strong, euery one dreaded and doubted mee, but now I am old and

fable, and here my death, none setteth ought by me, but of euery one I am abused: and because that I haue lost my vigour and strength, I haue also lost my dignity and worship. Therefore this fable sheweth how we must be meeke in prosperity, lest we be scorned of all men in our aduersity.

Of the Asse and the young Dogge.

NO man ought to meddle with that which he cannot doe. Wherefore Esop rehearseth such a fable, of an Asse which was in the house of a Lord, which had a little Dog which he loued well, and ate vpon his table. And the little Dog fawned and leapt vpon his gowne, and to all them that were in the house he shewed his loue: wherefore the Asse was enuious, and said in himselfe, If my Lord and his seruants loue this miscreant beast that sheweth loue towards them, by all reason they must loue me if I shew kindnesse towards them: and therefore from henceforth I will take my disport, and make ioy and play with my Lord and his seruants. And as the Asse was in his thought and imagination, it happened that hee saw his Lord entering into the house. The Asse then began to dance: and to make cheere, and to sing with his sweete voice: and approching towards his Lord, leapt vpon his shoulder, and began to kisse and licke him. The Lord then began to cry out with a loud voice, and said, Let this foule whoreson that hurteth me so sore be well beaten and put away. Then the Lords seruants toke great staues, and began to smite vpon the poore Asse, and beate him so sore that he had no more courage to dance or leape vpon his master.

O

Of the Lion and the Rat.

THe mighty and puissant must forgiue the feeble, for oft the little may well giue aide and help vnto the great; whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, of a Lion which slept in a forrest, and the Rats disporting them about him, it hapned that they went vpon the Lion, whereat he awaked, and with his claw he toke one of them: When the Rat saw her selfe thus taken, shee said vnto the Lion: My Lord, I pray you pardon me, for little shall you winne by my death, and I thought not to displease you. Then thought the Lion with himselfe, that it were no worship to put her to death, wherefore he forgaue her and let her goe. After this, it hapned that the same Lion was taken in a snare, whereupon he began to cry and make sorrow: and when the Rat heard him cry, he approached, and demanded what he ayled. And the Lion said: Seest thou not how I am taken and bound with this line: Then said the Rat, My Lord, I will not be vnkinde, but shall euer remember your great mercie toward me, and withall if I can I shall now helpe you. The Rat then began to bite the cord, and so long gnawed thereon, that the cord brake in sunder, and the Lion escaped.

Therefore this fable teacheth, how that a mighty man ought not to despise the little or meane, for he that cannot hurt by his strength may giue help by his diligent endeauour.

Of the young Kite, and his Mother.

HE that euer doth euill, ought not to haue trust that his prayer should be heard. Of which matter Esop, rehearseth this Fable. There was a Kite

which was sicke, in so much that he had no trust to recouer his health. And as he saw himselfe weake and feeble, he prayed his mother that she would pray vnto her gods for him. His mother answered him: My son, thou hast greatly offended and blaspheme the gods that now they will auenge them on thée, for thou praiest not to them for pity nor loue, but for feare & dread: for he which leadeth an euill life & in his dealing is obstinate, ought not to haue hope to be deliuered of his euill. For when one is fallen into extreme sickenesse, then is the time come that he must be paid according to his deeds: for he that offendeth other in his prosperity, shall find few friends when he falleth into aduersitie.

Of the Swallow and other birds.

HE that beléeueth not good counsell, shall not faile to be euill counselled, wherefore Esop rehearseth to vs this fable following. a Plowman sowed Linseed, & the Swallow seeing that of the same Linseed, men might haue nets and gins went & said to all other birds: Come ye all with me, and let vs pluck vp this, for if we let it grow, the labourer shall make gins and nets to take vs all: but all the birds dispraised her counsell. Then the swallow seeing this, went and harboured her selfe in the plowmans house. And when the flare was growne & pulled vp, the labourer made ginnes and nets to take birds, wherewith he tooke euery day diuers of those birds, and brought them home to his house. Which the Swallow seeing, said, I told you of this before but you would not be warned by me.

The end of the first Booke.

The

The Prologue of the second Booke.

ALL manner of fables are found to shew men what they should ensue and follow, and also, what they ought to leaue and flée: for Fable is as much to say in Poetry, as words in Theologie. And therefore I write fables to shew the good conditions of good men: for the Law is giuen for trespassers and misdoers: and because the good and iust be not subiect to the Law, as we finde and read of the Athenians, which liuing after the law of Nature, and also at their libertie, would néedes haue a King for to punish all euill; but because they were not accustomed to be informed, when any of them was corrected and punished, they were greatly troubled when their new King executed any Iustice: because that afore that time, they had neuer béene vnder any mans subiection, it was grieuous to them to be in seruitude, wherefore they were sorrowfull that euer they had demanded any King. Against the which Esop rehearseth this fable following.

The first Fable is of the Frogges and of Iupiter.

NOthing is so good as to liue iustly and at liberty, for frédome and liberty is better than any gold or siluer: whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable: Diuers frogs were in diches and ponds, at their own liberty, they all together with one consent made request vnto Iupiter, that he would giue them a King, and Iupiter thereof began

to marueil, and for their King he cast them downe a great peece of wood which with the fall thereof made a great sound in the water, whereof they had great dread and feare; and after as they approched to their King for to make him obeysance, and perceiued that it was but a peece of wood, they turned againe to Iupiter praying him earnestly that he would giue to them another King. Then Iupiter gaue to them the Heron to be their King. Then the Heron entred into the water, and ate them one after another. And when the Frogs saw that their King did so deuoure them, they began to weepe to Iupiter, and to say vnto him: Right high and mighty Iupiter, we pray thee to deliuer vs from the throte of this Tyrant, which eateth vs one after another. And then said Iupiter to them, the King which ye haue demanded shall be your master. Wherefore, when men haue that which is conuenient, they ought to be ioyfull and glad, and he that hath liberty, ought to kéep it well, for nothing is better than liberty, for liberty should not be sold for all the gold and siluer in the world.

Of the Doues, the Kite, and the Sparhawke.

He that putteth himselfe vnder the safegard or protection of the euill, shall aske helpe of them in time of néed, and get none, according to this present fable of the Doues which requested a Sparhawke to be their King, for to kéepe them from the Kite, and when the Sparhawke was made King ouer them, he begamne to deuore them: Then the Doues said among themselues, that better it were for

for vs to suffer of ỹ kite, than to be subiects vnto the Sparhawke, and to be martyred as we be, but herein we be well worthy, for we our selues are the onely cause of this mischiefe. Wherefore it is good wisedome for men to thinke well what will be the end, ere they begin any thing.

Of the theefe and the Dog.

If a man giue any thing, he that receiueth it, ought to take heede to what end it is giuen, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a theefe that came on a night into a mans house for to haue robbed him, and the good mans Dogge began to barke at him and then the theefe did cast at him a peece of bread: and then the dog said to him: thou castest this bread for no good will, but onely to the end that I should hold my peace, to the intent that thou mayst rob my Master; and therefore it were not good for me, that for a morsell of bread I should lose my life, wherefore goe thy way, or else I shall awake my Master and all his houshold. The dog then began to barke, and the theefe fled: and thus by couetousnesse many haue receiued great gifts, which haue caused them to lose their heads. Wherefore it is good to consider, and looke well to what intent the gift is giuen, to the end that none may be betrayed by gifts, neither ought any for gifts to worke treason.

Of the Wolfe and the Sow.

A man ought not to beleeue all that he heareth, whereof Esop rehearseth such a Fable, of a Wolfe which came towards a Sow, which kept and made sorow for the great paine that shee felt, because she was great with Pig. And the Wolfe came

to her, saying: my sister make the young pigs secure: for ioyfully and with good will I shall serue and helpe thee. And the Sow then said to him, goe forth on thy ways for I haue no need of the helpe of such a seruant: for as long as thou shalt stand here, I shall not deliuer me of my charge: for thou desirest nothing else but to haue them and eat them. The Wolfe then went his way, and anone the Sow was deliuered of her young: but if she had beleeued him, she had had a sorrowfull birth. And thus he that foolishly beleeueth, falsely it happeth to him.

Of the Mountaine that shooke.

RIght so it happeth, that he that shaketh, hath dread and is fearefull whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs such a fable, of a hill which began to tremble and shake, because of the Mole that delued. And as the folke saw that the earth began to shake, they were sore afraid, and durst not come nigh the mountaine, but when they knew it was long of the Mole, their doubt and dread was turned to ioy, and they began all to laugh. Therefore men ought not to beleeue all the which be full of great words: for some men will greatly fear where no danger is.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

THe birth causeth not a man so much to get some friends, as doth the goodnesse whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable, of a Wolfe which saw a Lambe among a great heard of Goates, the which Lambe sucked a Goate, and the Wolfe said to him: this Goate is not thy mother, goe and seeke her at the mountaine, for she shall nourish thee more sweetly and more tenderly than the Goate will: and the

Lambe

Lambe answered him: This Goate nourisheth me in stead of my mother, for she loueth to me her paps sooner than to any of her owne children, and yet more better it is for me to be here among these Goates, than to depart from hence, and to fall into thy throat and be deuoured. Therefore he is a foole, which being in freedome or surety, putteth himselfe in danger of death: for better it is to liue hardly in surety, than swetly in perile and danger.

Of the old Dog and his Master.

MEn ought not to dispraise the ancient, nor to put them backe, for if thou bee young, thou oughtest to desire greatly to come to bee old, also thou oughtest to praise the acts or deeds, which they haue done in their young age, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable. There was a Lord which had a dog, the which in his youth had beene of good kind: as namely to chase and hunt, and to haue great lust to run and take the wild beasts. And when this dogge was come to old age, and that he could no more run, it hapned once that he let goe and escaped from him a Hare, wherefore his Master was wroth and angry, and in great rage began to beat him. Then said the Dogge vnto him, My Master, for good seruice thou yeldest me euill: for in my young age and prosperity, I serued thee right well, and now that I am come to my old age, thou hatest and settest me backe. Remember, I pray thee how that in my young age I was strong and lustie, and now when I am old and feeble, thou settest nothing by me. Therefore, who so doth any good in his youth, in his old age he shall not continue in the

vertues

vertues which he possessed in his youth.

Of the Hares, and the Frogs.

MEN say commonly, that as the time goeth, so much folkes goe, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, that he which beholdeth the euill of other, must haue patience of the euill which may come vpon himselfe. For sometimes as a hunter chased through the fields and wood, the Hares began to flée for feare, and as they ran, they passed through a meadow full of Frogges, and when the frogges saw the Hares run, they began also to run and flée as fast. Then one of the hares seeing them so fearfull, said to his fellowes: let vs be no more so fearefull, for we be not alone in dread, but all these frogs be in doubt as well as we: therefore we ought not to despaire, but trust and hope to liue, and if a little aduersity come vpon us, we must endeauour to beare it patiently, for the time will one day come, that we shall be out of all feare and danger. Therefore in the vnhappy and vnfortunate time, men ought not to distrust, but euer to be in hope, that a time of better hap will come: euen as peace commeth after warre, and faire weather after raine.

Of the Wolfe and the Kid.

GOod children ought to keepe the commandements of their parents and friends, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Goate which had littered her young kid. And hunger tooke her, so that she would haue gone into the fields for to haue eaten some grasse, wherefore she said to her young kid, My childe, beware that if the Wolfe come hither to eat thee, that thou open not the

the doze to him. When the Goate was gone, the Wolfe came to the doze: and the Kidde answered him, Goe hence euill and false beast, for well I see thee through the hole, that to haue me thou faineſt the voice of my mother, and therefore I shall keepe me wel from opening the doze. Thus good children ought to mark and lay vp in their harts the precepts of their parents, for many a one is lost and vndone for lacke of obedience.

Of the Poore Man and the Serpent.

He that applies himselfe to doe other men harme ought not to thinke himselfe secure, wherefore Esop rehearseth this Fable. There was a Serpent which came into the house of a poze man, and liued of that which fell from the poze mans table, for the which thing there hapned great fortune to this man, and he became very rich. But on a day this man was angry against the Serpent, and toke a swoꝛd & smote at him, wherefore the Serpent went out of the house, and came no moze thither againe. A little after, this man fell againe into great pouertie, and then he knew, that by fortune of the Serpent he was become rich, wherefore it repented him that he had driuen away the Serpent. Then he went and humbled himselfe to the Serpent, saying: I pray thee that thou wilt pardon mee the offence that I haue done thee. And the Serpent said: Seeing thou repentest thee of thy misdeede, I forgiue thee: but as long as I shall liue, I shall remember thy malice: for as thou hurtest me once, so maist thou againe. Wherefore that which was once euill, shall euer so be held, men ought therefore not to insult ouer him, of whom

whom they receiue some benefit, nor yet to suspect their good and true friends.

Of the Hart, the Sheepe, and the Wolfe.

A Promise which is made by force and for feare, is not to be kept. Whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. A Hart in the presence of a Wolfe, demanded of a Sheepe that she should pay a bushell of corne, and the Wolfe commanded the Sheepe to pay it. And when the day of payment was come, the Hart demanded of the Sheepe the corne. And the Sheepe said to him; The covenants and promises which are made by force and dread, are not to be kept, for it was force to me being before the Wolfe, to promise and grant to thee, that which thou never lendest to mee; therefore thou shalt haue nothing of me. Wherefore it is good sometimes to make promise of some small things, to withstand greater losse: for the things that are done by force, haue no fidelitie.

Of the bald man and the flie.

OF a little euill may come a greater. Whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Fly which pricked a man vpon his bald head, and when he would haue smitten her, she fled away, and thus he smot himselfe, whereat the fly began to laugh: and the bald man said euill beast, thou deseruest well thy death, I smote my selfe, whereat thou diddest mocke me, but if I had hit thee thou haddest surely bene slaine. Therefore men say commonly, that at the harme of other men, none ought to laugh or scorne, but enuious and scornefull words procure many enemies, for which cause it oft happeneth, that a few bad words cause great danger.

Of

Of the Fox and the Storke.

NO man ought to doe vnto others, that which he would not should be done vnto himselfe. Of which Esop rehearseth this fable, to wit, of a Fox, which requested a Storke to Supper, and the Fox put the meat vpon a trencher, the which meat the Storke might not eate, whereof she toke great displeasure, and departed to her lodging: and because the Fox had thus deceiued her, shee bethought her selfe how shee might beguile the fox: for as men say, It is merry to beguile the beguilers. Wherefore the Storke prayed the Fox to come and sup with her, and the Storke put his meat within a glasse, and when the fox would haue eaten thereof he could not come by it, but onely licked the outside of the glasse, because he could not reach into it with his mouth. And then the Storke said to him, take part of such fare as thou gauest me. So the Fox right shamefully departed thence. Thus with the same rod which he made for other, he was beaten himselfe. Therefore he that beguileth other, must looke to be beguiled againe.

Of the Wolfe and the mans head.

SOme haue more worship than wit, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable of a Wolfe, which found a dead mans head, the which he turned vp and downe with his foote, and said: Ah how faire and pleasant hast thou beene, and now thou hast in thee neither wit nor beautie, also thou art without voice and without thought: and therefore men ought not to behold the beautie and faireneſſe of the body, but the goodneſſe of the courage: for sometimes men giue glory and worship

worship to some that haue not deserued it.

Of the Iay and the Peacocke.

NOne ought to weare another mans rayment, and to be proud thereof as it were his owne, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs this fable. There was a Iay which decked and arraied her selfe with the feathers of a Peacocke, and when he was so deckt, he went and conuersed among the Peacocks: and when he was with them, he began to dispraise his fellowes. And when the Peacocks knew that he was not of their kinde, they anon plucked of all his feathers, and beate him in such manner that no feathers abode vpon him, so he fled away all naked and bare: and when his fellowes saw him, they said: what gallant commeth here? Where be his feathers which he had a while agoe? hath he no shame to come into our company? Then all the birds came vnto him and beate him, saying: If thou hadst been content with thine owne rayment, thou hadst not ben put to this shame. Therefore it is not good to weare other mens clothes for many there are which brag much of that which is not their owne.

Of the Mule and the Fly.

SOme make a great labour which haue no might, whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. There was a Carter which had a Cart that a Mule drew forth and because that the Mule went not fast enough, the Fly said to the Mule, Ah lazie Mule, why goest thou no faster? I shall so greatly pirke thee, that I shall make thee goe lightly. The Mule answered, God keepe the Mone from the Wolues, for I haue no great dread ne feare of thee, but I dread and doubt

for

for my Maister that is upon me, which constraineth me to fulfill his will, and more I ought to dread and doubt him, than thes that art nought and of no value ne might. Wherefore men ought not to feare them which are not to be feared.

Of the Ant and the Fly.

TO make boast and banting is but vaine glory, whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. There was an Ant and a Fly which striued together, to wit, which was the most noble of them both: The Fly said to the Ant, come hither Ant, Wilt thou compare thy selfe with me, that dwell in the Kings palace, and eat and drinke at his Table: and also I kisse both King and Quéne, and the most faire maidens: thou poore miscreant beast, art euer within the earth. Then the Ant answered the Fly saying: Now know I well thy vanity and folly for thou vaunteſt thée of that whereof thou shouldeſt be dispraised, for in all places where thou sterſt, thou art hated and put out, and liueſt in great danger, and as sone as Winter commeth thou shalt die; but I shall abide alius within my chamber or hole, whereas I eat and drinke at pleasure: for the winter shall not forgiue thee thy misdœde but shall slay thee. Thus he that will mocke and dispraise other, ought first to loke well into himselfe, for it is more wisedome to see and amend our owne faults, than to loke into other mens.

Of the Wolfe, the Fox, and the Ape.

THe man that once falleth into any euill fault, he shall liue with dishonour, and insuspition euer after. And howbeit that in aduenture hee purpose to

doe some profitable thing to some other, yet he should not be trusted nor beleeued, whereof Esop rehearseth vnto us this table following. There was a Wolfe that said the Fox was an arrant theefe, and a robber of poore people: and the Fox answered and said, that he lied, and that he was a good and true man, and that he did much good and profit. And then the Ape, which was set as a Iudge betweene them, gaue sentence, and said thus to the Wolfe: Come hither, thou hast lost all that which thou demandest: And thou Fox, I beleeue well that thou hast vsurped and robbed something, howbeit that thou denyest it in iustice: but because that peace may bee betwixt you both, ye shall part together your goods, to the end that none of you both haue any whole part: For he that is accustomed to robbe and steale, with great paine he may abstaine or refraine himselfe from it, for one beguiler euermore begileth another. And because that the Ape found them both guilty and suspitious, she made them accord and part halfe by halfe. Wherefore they that be accustomed to any defraud deceit, or falshood, shall euer liue in great mislike and suspition.

Of the Man and the Wesill.

MEn ought well to consider the courage and thought of him that doth good, and to the end wherefore he doth it, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable, of a man which tooke a Wesill which chased after Rats within his house: And after when he had taken the Wesill, he would haue killed her. When the poore Wesill saw the wrath and fury of the man, she cryed vnto him for mercy, saying thus:

Of

My Lord, I require and pray thee that thou wilt pardon mee, and that thou wilt reward me for the great seruice I haue done thee, for euer I haue chased the Rats out of thy house. And the man said: thou didst it not for the loue of me, but onely thou hast done it to fill thine owne belly. for if thou hast done it for the loue of me, I would haue rewarded thee for it, but because thou didst it not for to serue mee, but to let and damage me, for what the Rats could not eat, thou hast eaten away, and being wared fat of mine owne bread, thou must render and giue to me all the fatnesse which thou hast gotten here, for he that robbeth must be robbed, Iuxta illud: pillatores pillabuntur. For it sufficeth not to doe well, but men must haue a good intent in doing of it. Wherefore I will not pardon thee, seeing thou deseruest no mercy, but presently put thee to death.

Of the Oxe and the Frogge.

The poore man ought not to compare himselfe to him that is rich, as Esop sheweth to vs by this present fable. There was a Frog in a medow which espied an Oxe, hard by in pasture, and perceiuing the Oxe great and her selfe little, shee began to swell against the Oxe, and said to her children, Am not I now as great as the Oxe, and as mighty? and her children said, nay mother, for when wee behold the Oxe, you seeme nothing like in bignesse to him. At these words the frogge began more to swell. And when the Oxe saw the pride and folly of the frogge, he trod vpon her with his foote, and brake her all to peeces. Therefore it is not good for the poore to compare himselfe with the rich, but rather to content

himselfe in his calling: lest by striuing beyond his power, he purchase not onely the ill will of the wealthy, but worke withall his owne woe & ouerthrow.

The end of the second. Booke.

The third Booke of the subtile Fables of Esop.

The first Fable of the Lion and the Shepheard.

They that are mighty and puissant, ought not to be vnmindfull of the benefits done vnto them by the poore and simple, and ought also to requite them as much as in them lieth. As this Fable of Esop approueth and sheweth vs, of a Lion which ran after a beast, and as he ran, a thorne entred into his foote, which afterward hurt and grieued him greatly. Wherefore he might not goe; but as well as he could he came to a shepheard which was keeping sheepe, and began to flatter him with his taile, shewing his foote which was hurt: The Sepheard was in great feare and dread, and cast before the Lion one of his sheepe, but the Lion demanded no meat: for more he desired to haue some helpe and ease of his foote than any meat. And when the shepheard saw the wound, hee with his needle subtilly drew the thorne out of his foote, and tooke out of the wound all the rotten flesh, and corruption, and anointed the wound with such sweet ointments, that anon the Lion was whole. And for

to

to render thanks vnto the Shepheard, the Lion kissed his hand, and went againe to the wood. And within a while after, it hapned that the Lion was taken, and conueighed into the Citie of Rome, and was put among the other beasts for to deuoure the misdoers. It hapned also in processe of time, that the same shepheard committed an offence, for which he was indged to bee deuoured of beasts, and as soone as hee was cast in among them, the Lion knew him, and began to behold him, and licked him with his tongue, and kept him from all other beasts. Then knew the shepheard that it was the same Lion which hee had made whole, and that he would now recompence him for the good which he had done to him. Whereof all the Romanes were greatly abashed, and would also know the cause of it, why he was so cherished by the wild beast. And when they knew the cause, thay gaue leaue to the shepheard to goe home, and sent the Lion againe to the Forrest. Men ought therefore to render thankes to their benefactors, for ingratitude is displeasing to God, and hurtfull to man.

Of the Lion and the Horse.

EAch one ought to shunne dissimulation, for none ought to faine himselfe otherwise than he is, as Esop rehearseth vnto vs by this fable. There was a Lion which saw a Horse eate grasse in a meadow, & being desirous to deuoure the Horse, hee went to him and said: God keepe thee my brother, I am a good Leech, and because thou hast a sore foote, I will helpe thee. The Horse knowing well the Lions euil intent, said: I am glad brother of thy comming hither, I pray thee now that thou wilt make my foote

whole: and then the Lion said to the Horse, let mee see thy foot; and as the Lion looked on it, the horse smote him on the forehead, in such wise that he brake his head, and the Lion fell to the ground, being hurt so grieuously that he could hardly rise againe. And being vp againe, he said to himselfe: Surely I am well worthy of this, for he that seeketh euill, euill commeth to him: and because that I dissembled, and fained my selfe to be a Physition, whereas I should haue shewed my selfe a great enemy, I therfore haue receiued a meete reward. Therefore euery one ought to shew himselfe plainely as he is.

Of the Horse and the Asse.

He that is fortunate and happie, knowes not how soone hee may be poore and miserable. And therefore none ought to despise the simple, but rather to thinke himselfe may become as meane and poore. Whereof Esop sheweth this fable. There was a great Horse which was well harnessed and apparrelled and his saddle richly furnished with gold, this Horse met with a poore Asse sore laden in a narrow way, and because the Asse turned not backe, incontinent the Horse said to him. Vnmannerly beast, hast thou no shame, beareſt thou no reuerence vnto thy Lord? Who holdeth me now, that I with my foote breake not thy head, because thou giueſt not place for me to passe by thee? The poore Asse answered neuer a word but was sorry: and after that, he would haue beaten him, whereat the Asse still held his peace as wise and sage, and so the horse went his way. And within a while after, it befell that fortune turned her wheele so downe, that this faire horse became old, leane,

leane and sicke, and out of all prosperitie, and his master commanded he should be had into the Towne, and instead of his rich saddle, men should put on his backe a panier for to beare dung to the fields. Now it hapned that the Asse which was in a meddow eating grasse, perceiued the Horse, and knew him well whereof being greatly abashed, he marualled much how he should become so poore and leane. And as the Asse went toward him, he said, Ha fellow where is now thy faire saddle, and thy rich bridle garnished with gold? how art thou now become so leane? what hath thy pride profited thee, & the great presumption which once thou diost shew to me? thinke now how thou art leane and vnthrifty, and how thou and I be not of one office. And now the miserable and vnhappie Horse was abashed, and for shame loked downeward and answered neuer a word. For all his felicitie was then cleane turned into aduersitie. Wherefore they that be in felicitie, ought not to mocke and scorne them that be in aduersitie, for many haue beene rich, which now are in great pouertie and neede.

Of the Birds and of the Beasts.

One man cannot serue two Maisters, which bee contrary one to the other, as Esop sheweth in this present fable. On a time the beasts made great warre against the birds, and they fought often together. And the But fearing the wolues, and that the beasts would vanquish them, she thought in her minde and said to her selfe, We are not able to ouercome the beasts, wherefore I will saue my life and goe take part with them. And when the battaile

was ordained on both sides, the Eagle began to enter into the battell of the Beasts by such a strength, that with the helpe of the other birds he got the field, and banquished the beasts, wherefore the Beasts made peace with the Birds, and were all of one accord and one will: and for the reason that the Bat hath made shée was condemned neuer to see the dayes neuer to fly but only by night: and also she was despoiled of all her feathers. So he that will serue two Maisters, contrary one to another, is not to be accounted iust nor true: and they which leaue their owne masters to serue a stranger, which is enemie to him, are worthy to be punished. For the Gospell saith, no man can serue both God and the deuill.

Of the Nightingale and the Sparhawke.

HEE that oppresseth the innocent, shall haue an euill end, whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable following. There was a Sparhawke which put her selfe within the nest of a Nightingale, where hée found the young birds. The Nightingale came and perceiued it, wherefore shée prayed and required him to haue pitty on her young birds: and the Sparhawke answered and said: If thou wilt that I grant thy request, thou must sing sweetly after my will. And the Nightingale began to sing swœtly, not with the heart, but with the throat only, for shée was filled with sorrow that otherwise she might not sing. The Sparhawke said to the Nightingale, this song pleaseth me not, and then hée toke one of the young birds and deuoured it. And as he would haue deuoured another, there came a Hunter, which did cast a Net vpon the Sparhawke, and when he would haue flowne

downe away, he might not, for he was taken. And therefore he that hurteth the innocent, is worthy to dye an euill death, as Cain did for killing Abel.

Of the Wolfe and the Fox.

FOrtune helpeth both good and euill folke, and all them which she helpeth, no euill happeth vnto them. But they that set their malice against Fortune, be subuerted & ouerthrowne by her. Whereof Esop rehearseth a fable. There was a Wolfe which had gathered together a great pray of meat, that he might the better liue diliciously, whereof the Fox had great enuy, and that he might steale some of that meat, he went into the caue of the Wolfe and said to him: My gossip, because that it is long since I saw thée, I am in great heauinesse and sorrow, and also because a long time we haue not bin conuersant together. When the Wolfe knew the malice of the Fox, he said, Thou art not come hither to sée how I fare, but to rob mee. For which words the Fox was angry, and went to a Shepheard, and said: If thou wilt be auenged on the Wolfe which is enemie to thy heard, this day shall I put him into thy hands. And the Shepheard answered the Fox thus: If thou doe as thou saiest, I shall pay thee well for it. Then the Fox shewed him the hole wherein hée was, and the Shepheard incontinent went thither, and with a speare he killed the Wolfe. By this meanes the Fox was well refreshed with the Wolues victuals, but as hée returned home, hée was deuoured of dogs: wherefore he said to himselfe, because I haue done euill, euill commeth to me: for sinne returneth to his Author, and euill to him that euill doth.

Of the Hart and the Hunter.

MEn sometime praise that that should be dispraised, and oftentimes men blame and dispraise that which should be praised, as Esop sheweth in this following fable. It happened that a Hart upon a time dranke in a fountaine or Well and as hee dranke he saw his head which was horned, wherefore hee praised much his hornes. And as hee looked on his legges, which were long and small, he dispraised and disliked them. And as he was drinking, hee heard the voice and barking of dogs, wherefore he would haue fled into the Forrest to haue saued himselfe: and as he saw the dogs so neere him, hee would faine haue entred within a bush hard by, but hee might not, for his hornes kept him out; and when hee saw that he might not escape, he began to say within himselfe, I haue blamed and dispraised my legges, which haue beene to me profitable, and haue praised my hornes, which be now the cause of my death. Men ought not therefore to dispraise the thing that is profitable, nor praise the thing that is unprofitable. They ought to praise and loue the Church of Christs, and all the commandements of the same. They ought also to dispraise and flee all sinne and vice, which is both euill and damnable.

Of the Goddesse Iuno and Venus, with other women.

BEfore the Gods and Goddesses, men must euer praise chastitie, for it is worshipfull and an honest thing to any man, to hold him well content alone. But Venus for her disport, & to driue away the time, would interpret the saying of the Hens, wherefore

she

she demanded a Hen that was in her house. But at this time I shall keepe my tongue and speake no further thereof, for many wise men haue seene and read all this booke, and understand all the matter of it. And because it is little and honest, and that wee all be bound to keepe Ladies in their worship and honour, and also in euery place we ought to praise them, wee will now cease to enquire further of this matter and history, which we shall leaue in Latine for great Clerkes, & in speciall for them that will spend their time to study and read the glosse of Esop.

Of the Knight & the Widdow.

THe woman that liueth in this world without reproach and blame, is worthy to bee praised greatly, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable of a man and a woman which loued much each other. It happened them by Atropos or death (which we all must suffer) that the said man died, and as men would haue borne him to his graue, which was without this towne, his wife made great sorrow, and wept pitteously: and when he was buried, she would remaine still vpon the graue, and made her a little lodge or house thereupon, and out of that lodge she would neuer depart for any faire words, neither for any gift, nor for displeasure of her Parents. Now it befell in the towne that a murderer was condemned to be hanged, and to the end he should not bee taken downe from the gallowes, commandement was giuen that a knight should keepe him, and as the knight kept him, hee had a great thirst, and perceiuing the lodge of the said woman, he went vnto her, and desired her to giue him some drinke, and she with good

heare

heart gaue him drinke, and when he had drunke, he returned toward the gallowes. This knight came another time to the woman to comfort her, and three times he did so. And as he was thus going and comming, doubting of no body, in the meane while the hanged man was taken from the gallowes: and when the knight was come to the gallowes: and saw his dead man gone, he was greatly abashed, and not without cause, for he was charged with him vpon paine of death, that if he were taken away, this knight should suffer death: and incontinent he went to the said woman, and killed her sonne, and lay before her as he had beene dead. And she said, my friend, what wilt thou that I doe for thee? Alas, said hee, I pray thee that thou helpe and counsell me at my need, for now because I haue not kept my theefe well, I must suffer death. And then the woman said, Haue thou no dread my friend, for I will finde meanes to deliuer thee, for we will take my husband, and hang him instead of the theefe. Then began she to delue, and toke out of the earth her husband, and at night, she hanged him on the gallowes in stead of the theefe, and said to the knight, Right deare friend, I pray thee keepe it secret, for we doe it secretly. Thus dead men haue some that sorrow for them, but the sorrow is sone gone and past. They that be aliue haue some which dread them, but their dread ceaseth when they be dead.

Of the young man and the common harlot.

OF the common and folish woman, Esop reherseth to vs a fable: There was a woman named Thais, which because of her fained loue, was

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the losse and death of many young men. To one that had beat her often before that time, she said: My right deare loue and friend, I suppose that of many one I am desired and loued: neuertheless, I shall set my loue on thee alone, wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt be mine, and I shall be thine, for all thy goods I care not, but for thy sweet body. But he that very well knew the fantasie of the woman, answered her right swetly, thy will and my will be both one, for thou art the I most desire, and the that I shall loue al the time of my life, if thou no more deceiue me, but because thou hast deceiued me in times past, I am the more afraid of thee. But notwithstanding this, thou art much pleasant and faire in the sight of me. Thus the one beguiled the other; for the loue of a common harlot is not to be trusted: thou oughtest therefore to thinke, that the common woman alwaies loueth thy siluer more than thee.

Of the Father and the euill sonne.

The good and wise father, ought to chastice his children in their young age, and not when they are old, for then it is much dificulty to make them bow, as Esop rehearseth to vs a Fable, of a Father which had a Sonne the which did nothing that hee ought to haue done, but euer was going and playing in the towne. And the Father for the misrule of his sonne, brawled euer, and beat his seruant, telling vnto them a fable of a Plowman or labourer, which bound a Full by the hornes to an Ore: The Bull would not be bound, but smote strongly at the man with his feete, and lanched at him with his hornes. At the last, being bound, the labourer said to them

I haue ioyned and bound you both together, to the end that you should doe some labour. But I will that the least of you two, that is, the Bull, be learned and taught of the greatest, which is the Ore; for I must (said the labourer to himselfe) binde them thus together, to the end that the Bull which is young, fierce, malicious and strong, smite ne hurt no bodie, whereof great danger might come to mee. But because I know well that the Ore shall teach and gouerne him well, I haue bound them both together. Whereby this fable sheweth vs, that the father ought both to teach and giue good example to the child, and to chastise him while he is young: for he that loueth his child, wil chastise him.

Of the Serpent and the File.

The Author, that is to wit, Esop rehearseth vnto vs a fable of two euils, saying, a Serpent entred sometime within the Forge of a Smith, for to search for some meat for her dinner, it hapned that she found a file, which she began to gnaw with her teeth. Then said the File to her if thou doe bite and gnaw me, yet shalt thou doe me no hurt, but thou shalt hurt thy selfe, for by my strength all the iron is plained, and therefore thou art a fole to gnaw on me: for I tell thee that no euill may hurt ne damage another euill, and so of the hard: for one hard shall not breake another, nor two enuious men shall not both ride vpon one Asse. Wherefore he that is mighty, must loue him that is as mighty.

Of the Wolues and the sheepe.

Such men as haue a good head and good captaine, ought not to leaue him, for he that leaueth, repenteth

penteth afterward, as Esop rehearseth to vs this Fable, of the shéepe which had warre and discention with the Wolues, and because that the Wolues were too strong for the Shéepe, the Shéepe tooke for their helpe the Dogs and the weathers also, and then was the battaile of the shéepe great and strong, and they fought so victoriously against the Wolues, that they put them to flight. And when the wolues saw the strength of their aduersaries, they sent an Embassadour toward the Shéep for to haue peace among them: the which Embassadour said vnto the shéepe in this manner: If ye will giue vs the Dogs, we shall sweare vnto you, that we shall neuer keep ne hold warre against you. And the Sheepe answered: If ye will sweare hereto, wee shall be content And thus they made peace together, but the wolues killed the Dogs which were Captaines of the sheepe: wherefore, when the little young wolues were grown to their age, they came to each part and contriued and assembled them together, and all with one accord and will said to their ancestors & fathers: Wee must eate vp all the sheepe. Their fathers answered and said vnto them: Wee haue made peace with them: Neuerthelesse the young wolues brake the peace and ran fiercely vpon the sheepe, and their fathers after them: and thus because that the sheepe had deliuered the dogges to the wolues which were their Captaines, they were all destroyed. Therefore it is good to keepe well a good captaine, which may at neede succour and helpe: For a true friend at neede, is better than gold; for if the sheepe had kept the dogges with them, the wolues had not deuoured them.

them, Wherefore it is a sure thing to keepe well the loue of his Protector and good friend.

Of the Man and the Wood.

He that giueth ayd and helpe to his enemy, is the cause of his owne death, as Esop rehearseth by this fable. There was a man which made an Axe, and after he had made it, he asked of the trées a handle for it, and the trées were content to giue him one. And when he had made fast the handle to the Axe, he began to cut and throw downe to the ground all the trees: wherefore the Oake and Ash said: if we be cut it is but right and reason, for of our owne selfe we be cut and throwne downe. And that it is not good for one to put himselfe into the danger and subiection of his enemy, as thou maist see by this present fable. For men ought not to giue the staffe by which they be beaten.

Of the Wolfe and the Dogge.

Libertie or frédome is a pleasant thing, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable. A wolfe and a Dog by chance met together. And the Wolfe demanded of the Dogge how he came to be so fat? the Dog answered: I haue well kept my Lords house, & haue barked at the théeues which came into my masters house: Wherefore hée and his men giue me plenty of meat, whereof I am faire and fat. And the Wolfe said to him, It is well said my brother, and surely séeing thou farest there so well, I haue a very great desire to dwell with thée, to the intent that thou and I may both dine together. Well, said the Dogge, come thou with me, if thou wilt be at thy ease as I am and haue no dread, nor doubt of any thing.

Then

Then the Wolfe went with the Dogge, and as they went by the way, the Wolfe beheld the Dogs necke which was all bare of haire, and demanded of the dog and said, My brother, why is thy necke so bare? and the dog said, it is by reason of my great collar of iron, to the which daily I am fastened, and at night I am vnbound for to keepe the house the better: then said the wolfe to the Dog, I that am in liberty, will not be put in such subiection to be bound and néd not, and therefore if thou beest accustomed thereto & likest well of it, continue so still and spare not, for I will not leaue my libertie to fill my body. By which we learne, that liberty is more to bee regarded than wealth.

Of the hands, the feete, and the belly.

HOw shall one doe any good to another, which can doe no good to his owne selfe? As thou mayest see by this Fable of the fét and the hands, which sometime had great strife with the belly, saying, all that we may or can get by our labour, thou eatest it, and yet thou doest no good, wherefore thou shalt haue no more of vs, but we will let thée dye for hunger. And when the belly was sore hungry, shée began to cry out, alas I die for hunger, giue mee somewhat to eat: and the fét and hands said, thou gettest nothing of vs. And because that the belly might haue no meat to sustaine it, the conduits thorow the which the meat palleth, became small and narrow, and within few daies after, the fét and hands through the féblenesse which they felt, would then haue laboured to get meat for the belly but it was to late: for by too long fasting, the conduits were

were ioyned together, and therefore the limbs might doe not good to other, that is, to wit, the belly. And he that gouerneth not well his belly, with great paine hee doth hold the other limbs in their strength and vertue. Wherefore a seruant ought to serue well his Master, to the end that his Master hold and keepe him honestly, and to receiue good reward of him when his Master shall see his faithfulnesse.

Of the Ape and the Fox.

OF the poore and the rich, Esop rehearseth a fable, of an Ape which prayed a Fox to lend him some of his taile, for to couer his buttocks therewith, saying thus to him, What doth thy long taile anaile thee? it anaileth thee nothing, but letteth thee: and that which letteth thee may be good for me. The foresaid I would that it were yet longer. For rather I would see it all foule and dagled, than it should beare to thee any such honour as to couer thy foule buttocks therewith. Giue not therefore away the thing that thou hast need of, lest thou want it afterward thy selfe.

Of the Merchant and the Asse.

MAny bee tormented after their death, wherefor men ought not to hasten their owne death, as Esop rehearseth by this fable of a Merchant which ledde an Asse laden into the market: and to be sone at market he beat the Asse and sore pricked him, wherefore the poore Asse wished and desired his owne death, weening that after his death he should be at rest. And after hee was well beaten he died. Then his Master made him to be slaine, and of his skinne hee made Tabers which be

be euer beaten. And thus what paine so euer men haue during their life, they ought not to desire or wish their death. For many there be that haue great paine in this world, that shall haue greater in another world: for a man hath no rest for death, but for his merits.

Of the Hart and the Oxe.

Onely by flying none is assured to escape the danger from which he flyeth, as is shewed by this Fable. There was a Hart which ranne before the dogges, to the end that hee should not bee taken, and he fledde into the first towne that he found, and entred into a stable wherein were many Oxen, to whom he declared the cause why he was come thither, praying them that they would sane him. And the Oxen said thus to him: alas poore Hart, thou art amongst vs euill rescued, thou wouldest bee more sure in the fields, for if thou be perceiued, or séene of our Maker, certainely thou art but dead. Alas for pittie said the Hart, I pray you that you will hide me within your racke, that I be not perceiued, and at night I shall goe hence, and shall put my selfe into a sure place. Then one of the seruants came to giue hay to the Oxen and when he had done he went away, and saw not the Hart, whereat the Hart greatly reioyced, weening that he had escaped the perill of death, wherefore he rendred thanks to the Oxen. But one of the Oxen said to him, It is easie to escape out of the hands of the blinde but it is hard to escape from the hand of them that may well see. For if our Master come hither, which hath aboue an hundred eies, certainely thou art but dead, if he perceiue thee. And

if hee ſée thee not certainely thou art ſaued, and ſhalt go forth on thy way ſurely. The Maſter within a ſhort while after went into the ſtable: and after he had demanded to ſée the hay which was before the Oxen, he went himſelfe and felt of it, and as he felt the hay, he felt alſo the hornes of the Hart with his hands, and to himſelfe he ſaid, what is this that I fæle here? And being afraid, called his ſeruants, and aſked how that Hart came there? And they ſaid to him: ſurely my Lord we cannot tell. Then their Lord was glad, and made the Hart to be taken and ſlaine, and the Lord made a great feaſt for to haue him eaten. It happeth therefore oftentimes, that he which ſuppoſeth to flie is taken ere he be aware, wherefore men ought alwaies to kæpe themſelues from doing ſuch things whereby they nèd not flie.

Of the Fallace and the Lion, and of their converſation.

TO be conuerſant among men of euill life, is a thing very perillous, as Eſop rehearſeth by this preſent fable. There was a Lyon ſtrong and mighty, which made himſelfe King for to haue the greater renowne and glory. And from thenceforth he began to change his conditions and cuſtome, ſhewing himſelfe courteous. And ſwearing that he would hurt no beaſts, but would kæpe them ſafe againſt euery one. Afterward, of this promiſe he repented him, becauſe it was difficult and hard to change his owne kinde. And therefore when he was angry he ledde him with ſome ſmall beaſts into a ſecret place. for to eate and deuoure them. And hée demanded if his

his breath stanke or not, and they said it stanke; and all they which answered not, he presently killed and deuoured them. It hapned among the rest, that he demanded of the Ape whether his breath stanke or not, and the Ape answered no, and said withall that it smelleth as sweete as any Bawme; and then the Lion had shame to slay the Ape; but he found a subtile falshood for to put him to death. He fained himselfe shortly after to be sicke, and commanded that all his Leches and Surgions should come before him. When they were come, he commanded them to looke on his vrine, and when they saw it, they said to him, Sir, be of good comfort and ye shall soone be whole: and ỹ Lion said, alas, right faine would I eat of an Ape. Certainely said his Phisicions, that is very good meat for you. Then was the Ape sent for, & notwithstanding that he worshipfully spake and answered to the King, the King made him to die, and deuoured him. It is perillous therefore & very harmefull to be in the fellowship of a Tyrant, for though it be against all equity and conscience, his will must stand for a law, and whatsoever he commandeth, must be put in practice, though it tend to the ruine of his best subiects.

The end of the third booke.

The firſt Fable make th mention of the Fox and the Raiſins.

He is not wiſe which deſireth any thing that he may not haue, as rehearſeth this preſent fable, of a Fox, which beheld the Raiſins that grew vpon a Vine, which he greatly deſired. And when he ſaw ỹ he could get none, he turned his ſorrow into ioy, & ſaid, theſe Raiſins be ſowre, and if I had ſome I would not eat them. Therefore he is wiſe that faineth not to deſire the thing that he would willingly haue.

Of the Weſell and the Rats.

It is better for a man to haue witte than ſtrength as Eſop ſheweth by this Fable. There was an old Weſill which might no more take Rats, wherefore ſhe was often hungry, and though that ſhe would hide her ſelfe within the flowre to take the rats which came to eat it. And as the Rats came to the flowre, ſhe tooke and ate them one after another. And as the oldeſt rat of all perceiued her malice, he ſaid thus in himſelfe, certainly I ſhall kepe me well from thee, for I know well thy malice and falſhood. Therefore he is wiſe that eſcapeth the malice of his enemy by wit rather than by force.

Of the Wolfe, the Shepheard, and the Hunter.

Many folke ſhew themſelues good in word, which are full of great fantaſies, as Eſop ſheweth by this Fable. There was a Wolfe which

which fledd from a Hunter, and as he fled he met a Shepheard, to whom he said, my friend, I pray thee tell not to him that followeth mee, which way I am gone: and the shepheard, said to him, feare nothing I shall shew to him another way; when the Hunter came, he demanded of the shepheard which way the Wolfe went. The shepheard both with his head and eyes shewed the hunter the place where the wolfe was and with his hand and tongue shewed the contrary. But the Wolfe perceiving well all ẏ false dealing of the shepheard, fled away & escaped. And within a while after, the shepheard met the wolfe, and said to him: pay me for that I kept thee secret. And the wolfe answered, I thanke thy hands and tongue, & not thy head ne eyes, for by them I should haue bene betrayed if I had not fled away. Therefore men must not trust him that hath two tongues, for such are like the scorpion, which healeth with his tongue and hurteth with his taile.

Of the goddesse Iuno, the Peacocke. and the Nightingale.

EVery one ought to be content with nature, and such goods as God hath sent them, to vse them iustly, as is rehearsed unto us by this Fable: There was a Peacock which came to the goddesse Iuno, & said vnto her, I am very heauy and sorowfull because I cannot sing as well as the Nightingale, for euery one mocketh and scorneth mee because I cannot sing. Then Iuno to comfort him, said: Thy faire forme and beauty is of farre greater worth, and more to bee praised than the song of the Nightingale, for thy feathers and thy colours bee resplendishing, like

vnto the precious Emerald, & there is no bird whose feathers are so faire and beautifull as thine be: the Peacock notwithstanding said to Iuno, all this is nothing seeing I cannot sing. Then Iuno spake againe thus to the Peacock to content him, saying, This is the disposition of the gods, which hath given to every one a seuerall proper ty & vertue, as they think meete themselues: and as they have given to thee faire beauty and goodly feathers, so have they given vnto the Nightingale sweete and pleasant song, and to all other Birds their proper qualitie. Wherefore euerie one ought to be content with that he hath, for the miserable couetous man, the more gods hee hath, the more he desireth.

Of the Panther and the Villaines.

EVerie one ought to doe well to the stranger, and to forgiue the miserable, as Esop rehearseth by this Fable following. There was a Panther which fell into a pit, and when the villaines or churles of the Country saw her, some of them began to smite her, and other said forgiue and pardon her, for she hath hurt no body; and there were other that gaue to her bread, and another that said to the villaines, beware you slay her not. And because they were all of sundry minds, every one of them went home againe, meaning that she would die within the said pit, but by little and little she climed up, and went her way. Within a while after, she having in memory the great iniury that had beene done to her, went againe to the place where shee had beene so beaten, and began to kill and slay all the beasts there about, and put the shepheard and swineheard, and other which kept beasts

beasts to flight, she likewise burnt her Corne, and did many other euils thereabout. And when the folkes of the Countrie saw the great damage that she did to them, they came toward her praying her to haue pitty on them. To whom she answered in this manner, I am not come hither to take vengance on them which haue had pittie on me, but only on them which would haue slaine me. And for the wicked and euill folke I receit this fable, to the end that they hurt no body, for if the villaines had taken pitty one as wel as another of the poore Panther, when she was in the pit, the foresaid euill had not hapned vnto them.

Of the Butchers and the Weathers.

That linage or kindred which is different in diuision, shall not doe any thing lightly to their profit, as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Butcher which entred into a stable full of weathers and when the weathers saw him, none of them said a word. The Butcher toke the first he found, then the weathers spak all together and said, Let him do what he will, and thus the Butcher toke them all one after another saue only one. And as he would haue taken him, the poore weather said, Iustly am I worthy to be taken, because I haue not holpe my fellowes: for he that will not helpe others, ought not to lok for helpe of thers: wherefore vertue vnited is better than vertue separated.

Of the Faulconer and the birds.

The wise ought euer to kéepe good counsell, and in no wise ought they to doe the contrarie, as rehearseth this fable of the birds which were ioyfull

and glad when the prime time came, because their nests were then couered all with leaues. Incontinent they beheld and saw a faulconer which dreſt and layd his laces and nets for to take them, and then they said altogether: ponder man hath pitty on vs, for when he beholdeth vs, he weepeth And the Partrich which had often experimented all the deceites of the said faulconer said to them: kéep ye all well from the said man, for he seeketh nothing but the manner how to take you and when he hath taken you he will eat and deuoure you, or else beare you to the market and sell you: & as many as beléeued his counsell, were saued. Wherfore they that scorne good counsell, are worthy to fall into danger.

Of the true man, the Lyer and the Ape.

MAny men in time past praised more the people full of leasings than them that told truth, which thing reigneth with some vnto this day, as wee may vnderstand by this present Fable, of a true man and a lyer, which went both together throlow the country, and so long they went together in their iourneyes, as they came to a Prouince of Apes, and the king of Apes made them to be taken and brought before him: he being set in his maiesty, like an Emperour, and all his Apes about him, as subiects be about their Lord, demanded of the Lyer and said, Who am I? and the lyar flatteringly said vnto him, Thou art Emperour and King, and the fairest creature that is vpon the Earth. Then the King demanded of him againe: Who be these that be about me? and the liar answered, Sir, they be your knights and your subiects, to kéepe your person and your

your realme. Then the King said, thou art a good man, I will that thou be my great Steward of my household, and that suerie one beare to thée honour and reuerence. When the true man heard all this, hée said to himselfe, if this man for making of lyes be so greatly aduanced, then by great reason I shall be more worshipped if I speake truth. Then the King asked the true man and said: Who am I, and all that be about me? then the true man answered: Thou art an Ape, and a beast right abominable, and all they which are about thée, are like vnto thée. Then did the King command he should be torne with téth and clawes, and cut all in péces And therefore it happeth oft, that liers be aduanced, and true men set low, yea many times for saying the truth, men lése their liues, which thing is against all iustice and equitie.

Of the Horse, the Hunter, and the Hart.

NOne ought to put himselfe in subiection, for to auenge him on other, for better it is not to submit himselfe, than to be submitted: as Esop rehearseth by this fable following. There was an Horse which enuied an Hart, because she was fairer than he. This Horse through enuie went vnto an Hunter, to whom he said in this manner: If thou wilt beléeue me we shall this day take a good prey; leape vpon my backe, and take thy sword and we shall chase the Hart: and thou shalt kill him with thy sword, and so thou maiest eate him and sell his skinne. And then the Hunter moued by auarice, demanded of the Horse saying, Thinkest thou indéed wee may take the Hart of whom thou speakest to me? And

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the horse answered thus, Assure thy selfe of it, for hereto shall I put all my diligence and strength, leape on my backe, and doe after my counsell: and then the Hunter lept vpon the Horse, and began to runne him after the Hart; and when the Hart saw him come he fled, but by reason that the Hart ran faster than the horse did, he escaped from them and saued himselfe. And when the horse felt himselfe very wearie, and that he might no more runne, hee said to the hunter in this manner, light from my backe for I may beare thee no more, and I haue missed of my prey. Then said the hunter to the horse, seeing thou art entred into my hands, thou shalt not yet escape from me thus, thou hast the bridle in thy mouth, whereby thou maiest be kept still and restrained, and though thou wilt leape the saddle shall keepe me and if thou wilt cast thy feete from thee I haue good spurres to constraine thee and make thee to go whether thou wilt or no, where I will haue thee: therefore keep thy selfe well, that thou shew not thy selfe rebellious vnto me. It is not good therefore for a man to put himselfe in subiection to another, that thereby he may be auenged of his aduersary, for who so submitteth himselfe vnder the might of another, is bound to doe his will.

Of the Asse and the Lion.

GReat callers by their high and loud cry, suppose thereby to make folke afraid, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was an Asse which sometime met with a Lion, to whom he said: Let vs both goe vp to the top of a mountaine, and I shall shew thee how the beasts be afraid of me: and the Lion began to smile, and answered the Asse, goe

we my brother: and when they were vpon the top of the hill, the Asse began to cry, and the Fores and Hares began to flee. When the Asse saw them flee, he said to the Lion, seest thou not how ỹ Beasts dread and doubt me? The Lion said, I had also beene feare-full of thy voyce, if I had not knowr. verily ỹ thou art but an Asse. Wherefore men n.ed not to doubt him which aduanceth himselfe to doe that he cannot doe. Neither need men to feare a foole for his noise, nor his great voice.

Of the Hawke and other birds.

The hypocrites make to God a beard of straw, as in this fable of a Hawk, which sometime fained that he would celebrate a nativity, or hold a very great feast, the which should be kept within a temple: and vnto this feast and solemnity, he inuited and summoned all the small Birds, to which they came. And incontinent as they were all come to the feast, and entred into the temple, the Hawke did shut the gate, and put them all to death one after another. Wherefore this fable sheweth vnto us, how we must keepe our selues from all them which vnder faire seeming haue a false heart, for those be hypocrites, and deceiuers of God and the world.

Of the Fox and the Lion.

He is well aduised that taketh warning by the perill of other men, as this fable sheweth, of a Lion which sometime fained himselfe sicke, and when the beasts knew that the Lion was sicke, they would goe all to visit and see him as their King, and incontinent as the beasts entred into his house to see him, he deuoured them. And when the Fores were

come

come to the gate for to haue visited the Lion, they knew well the fallace and falshod of the Lion, and saluted him at the entry of the gate, but entred not within: and when the Lion saw that they would not enter into his house, he demanded of them why they would not come in. Then one of the Foxes said to him, We perceiue well by the traces, ꝑ all those beasts which haue entred into thy house come not out againe, wherefore we thinke, that if wee should once enter in, wee should come no more out. He therefore is to be accounted wise, which taketh warning by other mens harms.

Of the Asse and the Wolfe.

FAith and truth from an euill man is seldome to be expected. As Esop rehearseth by this fable, of a Wolfe which visited an Asse which was very sicke, the wolfe began to feele and touch him, and demanded of him and said, My brother & friend, whereabout is thy sore? and the Asse said to him: euen in that place where thou touchest: and then the Wolfe faining to helpe, began to bite and smite him. Men must therefore beware of flatterers, for they say one thing, and doe another.

Of the Hedgehog and the three Kids.

THose that be young ought not to mock & scorne their elders, as Esop sheweth by this fable of three little Goates which mocked a great Hedgehogge which fled before a Wolfe: and when he perceiued their scorning, he said vnto them, Ah poore fooles, ye wot not wherefore I flee, if yee wist and knew the perill, ye would not mocke mee. Wherefore, when men see the great and mighty be fearefull,

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the lesse and feeble ought not to thinke themselues safe and sure: for when a towne is taken by hazard of war the whole country about ought to tremble & be afraid.

Of the Man and the Lion

MEn ought not to beleeue the Painter, but the truth and the deed. As men may see by this present Fable, of a man and a Lion, which had strife together, and were in great dissention, for to wit and know which of them was more strong. The man said he was stronger than the Lion, and for to haue his saying verified, shewed to the Lion a picture, whereas a man had victory ouer a Lion, and the picture of Samson the strong. Then said the Lion vnto the man, if the Lions could make pictures as well as men, it should be here shewen, how the Lion had victory ouer the man, and now (quoth he) I shall shew thee the proofe hereof: then the Lion ledde the man to a great pit, and there they fought together, but the Lion cast the man into the pit, and submitted him to his subiection, saying: Thou man, now knowest thou well which of vs two be the stronger, and therefore by the worke, the workman may be knowne.

Of the Camell and the Fly.

HEE that hath no might ought not to praise himselfe, as Esop sheweth by this fable. It hapned that a Fly because of the Camels haire, leapt to the backe of the Camell which was loaden, and was borne of him all the day: and when they had gone a great way, and that the Camell came to his Inne, and was put in the stable, the Fly leapt from him to the

the ground beside the fote of the Camell: and then said to the Camell, I haue pitty of thee, and am come downe from thy back, because I would no more be burthensome vnto thee. And the Camell said to the Fly, I thanke thee, howbeit I am not sore laden of thee. And therefore, of him which may not greatly hurt, little estimation is to be made.

Of the Ant and the Creket.

NEcessary it is for euery man to prouide for himselfe in summer, such things whereof he shall haue need in winter, as thou maist se by this present Fable. There was a Creket which in the winter time demanded of the Ant some corne to eat. And then the Ant said to the Creket, what hast thou done all the summer last past? and the Creket answered, I haue sung. Then said the Ant, Of my Corne thou gettest none: for if thou haue sung all the Summer, goe dance all the Winter. By which we learne, that there is a time ordained for labour, as well as a time for rest. For he that will not worke when he should, shall want when he would not.

Of the Pilgrim, and the sword.

ONe euill man may be cause of great perill and losse to many folkes, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was a Pilgrim which by chance found in the way a sword, and hee asked of the sword what is he that hath lost thee? And the sword answered to him, One man alone hath lost me, but many a one I haue lost. And therefore an euill man may well be lost, but ere he be lost he may well let many a one. For by euill man, may come into a countrey mans euils.

Of

Of the sheepe and the Crow.

NOne ought to doe iniurie, nor despise the poore innocents or simple ones: As rehearseth this present fable of a Crow, which set her selfe on the backe of a Sheepe. And when the sheepe had borne her a great while, she said to her, thou shalt keep thy selfe well to set thee vpon a dogge. Then the Crow said to the sheepe, thinkest thou not poore innocent, but that I wot well with whom I play: for I am old and malicious, and my kind is to harme all innocents, and to be a friend vnto the euill. Wherefore this Fable sheweth, that there be folke of such kinds as they will doe no good worke, but onely let and hinder the innocent and simple.

Of the Tree and the Reede.

NOne ought to be proud against his Lord, but to humble himselfe vntohim, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a great Tree which would neuer bow for any winde, and the Reede which was at his feet, bowed euery way euen as the winde pleased. Whereupon the Tree said to the Reede, why doest thou not stand still as I doe? and the Reede answered, It is not the might that thou hast. And the Tree said to the Reede proudly, then haue I more strength than thou. And anon after, there came a great wind which threw downe the said Tree to the ground, and the Reede abode vp still. Thus we learne hereby, that the proude ere trey be aware are suddenly throwne downe, and the humble many times are exalted.

The end of the fourth booke.

Here

Here beginneth the fifth Booke, whereof the first Fable is of the Mule, the Wolfe and the Fox.

MEn call many folke Alles that bee very subtile and wise, and many thinke themselues wise, which deserue to be accounted Alles, as appeareth by this Fable: there was a Mule which ate grasse in a meddow neare a great Forrest, to whom came a Fore, which demanded of him and said: What art thou? And the Mule answered, I am a beast. And the For said, I doe not aske that of thee, but I aske who was thy Father? and the Mule answered. My great father was a Horse. And the For said againe, I doe not aske that, but onely that thou tell me what is thy name. And the Mule said, I know not because I was little when my father dyed: neuertheleſſe to the end that my name should not bee forgotten, my father made it to bee written vnder my left fot behind, wherefore if thou wilt know my name, looke vnder my foote. And when the For vnderstood the falshood of the Mule, he went againe into the forrest and met the Wolfe, to whom he said: Ha miscreant beast, what doest thou here? come with me, and into thy hands I shall put a good prey to fill thy belly. Looke in yonder meddow, and there thou shalt find a good fat beast, with that which thy hunger may bee satisfied. The Wolfe went presently into the meddow, and finding there the Mule, he said vnto him in this manner: Who art thou? and the

Mule

Mule answered the Wolfe, saying, I am a Beast. The Wolfe said to him, that is not the thing which I aske of thee, but tell me how thou art named. The Mule said, I wot not, but neuerthelesse, if thou wilt know my name, thou shalt find it written vnder my left foot behinde. When the Wolfe said, I pray thee shew it me, and the Mule lift vp his foot and as the Wolfe looked thereon, the Mule gaue him such a kicke there with on the foze head, that almost the braines fell out of his head. And then the Foz which was behinde a bow and saw all the matter, began to laugh, and mocke the Wolfe, saying: Foule beast, thou wottest well that thou canst not read, wherefore euill therof is come to thee, thy selfe being cause of it. Foz none ought to take vpon him the thing, which he cannot doe, lest by shewing his ignozance he be worthy to be mocked for his labour.

Of the Bore and the Wolfe.

There are some that presume foz to be great persons; and disgraise their owne parents, which at the last doe become poore, and fall into great dishonour: as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Bore among a heard of swine, and foz to haue dominion and lordship euer them, hee began to make a great rumor and shewed his great teeth to make the other swine afraid: but because they knew him, they set nought by him, wherefore he was much displeased, and went thence vnto the heard of Sheepe and Lambes. And when he was there, he began to make a great rumor, and shewed them his great teeth. And when the Lambes heard him, they were very much afraid, and began to shake foz feare. Then said the

Boze within himselfe, Here is the place wherein I must abide and dwell, for here I shall be greatly worshipped, for euery one quaketh for feare of me. Then came the wolfe thither for to haue gotten some prey, and the lambes began to flee: but the bore as proud would not stirre him, nor got from the place, because he supposed himselfe Lord, but the Wolfe tooke him, and bare him into the wood for to eat him. And as the wolfe bare him, it happened that he passed before the heard of swine which the boze had left, and when the boze perceiued and knew them, hee cryed aloud and prayed them for Gods loue that they would helpe him, saying, that without their helpe he was but dead. And then the swine all with one consent, went and recouered their fellow, and slew the Wolfe. When the Boze was thus deliuered, and saw himselfe among the swine, he began to haue shame, because he was thus departed and gon from their fellowshippe, and said to them, My brethren and friends, I am well worthy to suffer this paine, because I haue gone and departed from you. Wherefore, he that is well, ought so to keep himselfe, for many by pride count to be great Lords, and oft fall thereby into great pouertie.

Of the Fox and the Cocke.

Oftentimes much speech hurteth, as rehearseth this Fable. There was a Fox which came to a Cock and said, I would faine know if thou canst sing, as well as thy father could. And the Cocke shut his eyes and began to crow and sing. And then the Fox caught him and carried him away. And the people of the towne cried and said, the fox beareth away the

Cocke.

cocke. Then the Cocke said thus to the fox, My Lord, vnderstandest thou not that the people say, thou bearest away their cocke, tell to them that it is thine and not theirs. And as the fox said, It is not yours but mine, the Cocke escaped from the fores mouth, and flew vp into a tree, and then the Cocke said to the fox, Now thou lieste, for I am theirs and not thine. And then the fox began to hit the earth both with his mouth and head, saying, Mouth thou hast spoken too much, thou mightest haue taken the Cocke, had it not beene for thy many words. Thus we see that ouermuch talking letteth, and too much crowing smarteth keepe thy selfe therefore from ouermany words, lest afterward it repent thee.

Of the Dragon and the Labourer.

NOne ought to render euill for good, and they that helpe, ought not to be hurt, as this fable sheweth, of a Dragon which was within a riuer and as the riuer was diminished of water, the Dragon abode at the riuer, which was all drie, and thus for lacke of water hee could not stirre him. A labourer or villaine came that way, and demanded of the Dragon, saying: what dost thou here? and the Dragon said, here I am without water, without the which I cannot moue, but if thou wilt bind me, and set me vpon thy Asse, and lead me into a riuer. I shall giue thee abundance of gold and siluer; and the villaine for couetousnesse bound him and led him into the riuer: and when he had vnbound him, hee demanded of him his salarie or payment. The Dragon said to him, because thou hast vnbound me thou wilt bee paid, and because that I am now hungry, I will eat thee: and

the villaine answered and said, for my labour wilt thou eat and deuoure me? And as they striued together, the for being within the Forrest, and hearing their questioning, came to him and said in this manner. Striue ye no more together, for I will accord and make peace betwixt you, let each of you tell to me his reason, for to wet which of you haue right. And when each of them had told his tale, The for said to the villaine, shew to me how thou vnbyndest the Dragon, that I may giue thereof a lawfull sentence. And the villaine, put the Dragon vpon his Asse, and bound him as he did before. Then the for demanded of the Dragon, held he thee so fast bound as thou art now? and the Dragon answered, Yea my Lord, an, yet more hard. And the for said to the villaine, bind her yet more harder, for he that well bindeth well he can vnbind. And when the Dragon was fast bound, the for said to the villaine, beare him againe where thou didst first binde him, and there leaue him bound as he is now, and so he shall not eat and deuoure thee. For he that doth euill, shall be rewarded with euill: and they that offer harme to the poore shall haue punishment from God.

Of the Fox and the Cat.

MAny there be which aduance themselues, and thynke that they be wise and subtill, which be starke fooles and know nothing, as reheatseth this present Fable, of a for that sometime met with a Cat, to whom hee said, My Gossip, God giue you good day. And the Cat said, My Lord, God giue you good life. And then the for demanded of him:

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my gossip, what canst thou doe? And the Cat said vnto him, I can leape a little, and the for said to him, certainely thou art not worthy to liue, because thou canst doe nothing. And because that the Cat was angry at the Fores words, he demanded of the For and said, Gossip what canst thou doe? A thousand sundry wiles haue I, said the For, for I haue a sacke full of sciences and wiles, and I am so great a scholler that none can deceiue me. And as they were thus talking together, the Cat perceiued a Knight comming towards them, which had many Dogges with him, wherefore he said to the For, my gossip, certainely I see a Knight comming hitherward, which hath with him many dogges, the which as ye know be our enemies. The for answered, My gossip, thou speakest like a coward, and one that is affraid, let him come, and care not thou. And incontinent the dogges perceiued the cat and the for, and began to run vpon them: and when the for saw them come, he said to the Cat: Let vs flee gossip, to whom the Cat answered: certainly gossip there is no need: neuertheless the for beleeued not the Cat, but fled, and ran as fast as he could to saue him, and the Cat leapt vp into a tree and saued her selfe. Now shall we see who shall play best for to preserue and saue himselfe. When the Cat was vpon the tree, she looked about her, and saw how the dogges held the for with their teeth to whom she cried and said, O my gossip and subtile for, of a thousand wiles that thou canst doe, let me now see one of them. The for answered not, but he was killed of the dogges, and the Cat escaped. Wherefore the wise ought not to dispraise the

simple, for some are supposed to be wise, and yet are very fooles.

Of the Hee Goat and the Wolfe.

He that is feeble, ought not to arme himselfe against the strong, as rehearseth this fable, of a Wolfe which sometime ranne fast after a hee Goate, and the hee Goate for to saue himselfe leapt upon a rocke, and the Wolfe besieged him. And after when they had dwelled there two or three daies, the wolfe began to wax hungry, and the goat to haue thirst. And thus the Wolfe went for to eat, and the Goat to drinke. And as the Goat dranke, he saw his shadow in the water, and beholding his shadow, said thus within himselfe, Hast thou so faire legges, so faire a beard, and so faire hornes, and hast feare of the Wolfe? If it happen that he come againe, I will charge him well, and keepe him well, and he shall haue no charge over me. And the Wolfe which held his peace, and harkned what he said, tooke him by one of his legges saying thus: what words be these that thou doest say brother hee Goate? And when the goat saw that he was taken tardy, hee thus answered the Wolfe, O my Lord, I say nothing, haue pitty on me, I know well that I haue offended: notwithstanding, the Wolfe tooke him by the necke and strangled him. Therefore it is a very great folly for those that are feeble, to make any warre against the mighty.

Of the Wolfe and the Asse.

None ought to beleeue lightly the councell of him whom he mindeth to hurt, as yee may see by this fable. There was a Wolfe which met with an Asse, to whom hee said, My brother, I am hungry,

hungry, wherefore I must néeds eate thée. And the Asse answered him right gently. My Lord, with me thou maiest doe what thou wilt, for if thou eatest me, thou shalt put me out of great paine: but I pray thée, if thou wilt eat me, that thou vouchsafe to eat me out of the high way: for well thou knowest that I bring home raisins from the Wine, and the corne from the fields, also thou knowest that I beare home the wood from the Forrest, and when my Master will edifie some building, I must goe fetch the stones from the mountaine, and also I beare the corne to the mill, and after I beare home the meale, and briefly I was borne in a cursed houre, for to all paine, and to all labour I am subiect: for the which I would not that thou shouldest eat me here in the high way, for the great shame that might come thereof to me: but I instantly require thée, that thou wilt heare my counsell, namely, that we goe into the forrest, and thou shalt bind me by the brest as thy seruant, and I shall bind thee by the neck as my master, and thou shalt leade me before thee into the wood whersoeuer thou wilt, to the end that there thou maiest more secretly eat me. To this the Wolfe accorded, and said, I am willing to doe so. And when they were come into the forrest, they bound each other in the manner as is aforesaid. And when they were bound, the Wolfe said to the Asse, goe whither thou wilt, and goe before to shew the way, and the Asse went before, and led the wolfe into the right way of his masters house. And when the Wolfe began to know the way, hee said to the Asse: We goe not the right way. To the which the Asse answered, My Lord, say not so, for

certainely this is the right way, but for all that the Wolfe would haue gone another way. Neuerthelesse, the Asse led him to the house of his Master, and as his Master and all his men saw the Asse draw the wolfe after him, and would haue entred into the house, they came out with clubs and staues, and smote on the Wolfe, and as one of them would haue smitten a great stroake vpon the Wolfes head, he brake the cord wherwith he was bound, and so he escaped and ranne away from them sore hurt and beaten. And the Asse for great ioy that she was so escaped from the Wolfe, began to sing, and the wolfe which was vpon the mountaine, hearing the voice of the Asse, began to say to himselfe: thou maiest be merrie and glad, but I shall keepe thee well another time, that thou shalt not bind me as thou hast done. And therefore it is a great folly to beleeue the counsell of him whom men would hurt, and to put himselfe in his subiection. He that hath beene once beguiled, must take heed another time, for he to whom men purpose to doe some euill thrue, when they haue him at aduantage, they must keepe them on thsure r side.

Of the Serpent and the Labourer.

The author of this booke rehearseth such another fable, and of such meaning as the precedent, that is to wit, that men should not beleeue him vnto whom they haue done euill, saying: that sometime in haruest time a labourer went to see his goods in the fields, the which met in his way a Serpent, and with a staffe which he bare in his hand smote the said serpent, and gaue him such a stroake on the head, that he almost new him. Then the Serpent seeing himselfe

selfe sore hurt, hee went from the man, and entred into his house, & said vnto the Labourer, O euil friend thou hast beaten me, but I warne thee, that thou neuer beleeue him vnto whom thou hast done any euill. Of which words the labourer made little account, and went forth on his way. It shortly befell, that this Labourer went againe that way for to eare his ground. To whom the Serpent said, O my friend, whither goest thou? and the labourer said vnto him, I goe to eare and plow my ground. And he said vnto him, sowe not to much; for this yeere shall be full of raine, and great abundance of water shall fall. But the labourer said, I beleeue not him whom I haue sometime done any euill, and without more words. The labourer went forth on his way, and beleeued not the serpent, but made all his ground to be sowed with as much corne as he might. And the same yeere fell great store of water, wherefore the said Labourer had but little corne, for the most part of the corne that he had sowne, perished because of the great raine. And the next yeere following, as the Labourer passed by the hole of the aforesaid Serpent, and went to sow his ground, the Serpent demanded of him, My friend, whither goest thou? The Labourer answered, I goe to sow my ground with corne and other graine, such as I hope shall be necessarie for me in time to come. Then said the Serpent, My friend, sow but little corne, for the summer next comming shall be so hote, that by drinesse and heate, all the corne sowne in the earth shall perish: but beleeue not him to whom thou hast done any euill. And without any more speech the Labourer went and thought of the words of the

serpent, and weening that the serpent had said so to deceiue him, he sowed as much corne and other graine as he might, and it happened that the Summer next following was such as is aboue said, wherefore the man was beguiled, for he gathered the same yere nothing. The next yere following, the said labourer went againe for to eare his ground: and as the serpent saw him come, he demanded of the Labourer in this manner: My friend, whither goest thou? Then answered the labourer, I goe to eare my land. Then said the serpent, My friend, sow not to much, ne to little of corne and other graine, saw betweene both: Neuertheless, beleeue not him vnto whom thou hast done euill: and I tell thee that this yeare shall be more temperate and fertile of all manner of corne that thou sowest. The labourer had no sooner heard these words, but forthwith he went his way, and did as the serpent had said, and that yere he gathered much good, because of the good disposition of the time. And on a day the same yere, the Serpent met the same labourer comming from haruest, vnto whom he said, How say my friend, hast thou not found this yeere great plenty of good, as I told thee before? And the labourer answered, yea certainly, whereof I thanke thee. And then the serpent demanded of him remuneration, or reward. And the labourer demanded what he would haue, the serpent said, I demand of thee nothing, but onely that to morrow in the morning thou send me a dishfull of milke by some of thy children. And then the serpent shewed the labourer the hole of his dwelling, and said vnto him, Tell thy sonne that he bring the milke hither,

but

but take heed to that, the other while I told thee that thou beleeuest not him to whom thou hast done euill. And anon after, when these things were said, the labourer went homeward, and in the morning he tooke his sonne a dishfull of milke, and he carried it to the serpent, and set it before the hole; and the serpent came out, and slew the childe with his venomes And when the labourer came to the field, passing by the hole of the said serpent, he found his sonne lying dead vpon the ground. Then the labourer began to cry with a loud voice, as one full of sorrow or heauinesse, saying: Ha cursed & euill serpent, venemous and false traitor, thou hast deceiued me. A wicked and deceitfull beast, full of contagious euill, thou hast slaine my sonne. And the serpent said vnto him, I will well that thou know that I haue not slaine him sorrowfully, ne without cause, but for to auenge me of the hurt that thou hast done to me without cause, and hast not amended it. Remembrest thou not how oft I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not beleeue him vnto whom thou hast done euill? Remember it now that I am auenged of thee. This Fable sheweth, how men ought not to beleeue or giue any credit to them whom they haue done some harme in time past. For old hatred is sone renued, and malice will not be satisfied without working euill.

Of the Fox, the Wolfe, and the Lion.

He that hath beene endamaged by another, ought not to take vengeance by the tongue, in giuing iniurious words, because such vengeance is dishonest, as this present fable following sheweth. Some-

time

time there was a Fox that ate fish in a river. It hap-
ned that the wolfe came that way, and when he saw
the fox which ate with so great appetite, hée began
to say, my brother give me some fish, And the Fox
answered him, Alas my Lord, It behoueth not that
ye eat the reléefe of my table, but for the worship of
your person I shall counsell you well. Doe so much
as get you a basket: and I shall teach you how yee
shall take fish, to the end that yée may alwaies take
some when ye be hungry. And the Wolfe went into
the street, and stole a basket, and brought it with him,
and the fox tooke the basket, and bound it with a cord
at the wolfes taile, and when it was well bound, the
Fox said to the wolfe, goe you into the river, & I shall
take heed to the basket. And the wolfe did as the fox
had him, and as the wolfe was going within the wa-
ter, the Fox by his malice filled the basket full of
stones, and when the basket was full, the Fox said
to the Wolfe: Certainly my Lord, I may no more
lift, ne hold the basket so full: for it is full of fish:
and the Wolfe weening that the fox had said truth,
said, I render thankes to the gods, that once I may
sée and learne the excellent art of fishing. And then
the fox said to him. My Lord, abide you here, and
I shall fetch some to helpe vs for to take the fish out of
the basket. And in saying these words, the Fox
ran into the streete, where he found diuers men, to
whom he said in this manner: What doe you here?
why stand ye idle? See yonder is the Wolfe which
ate your sheepe, your Lambes and your beasts, and
now he taketh your fish out of the riuer, and eateth
it. And then all the men came together, some with

slings

stings, and some with bowes, and other with staues to the riuer, where they found the wolfe, whom they beat outragiously. And when the poore Wolfe saw himselfe thus oppressed and beaten with stroakes, he began with all his strength and might to drawe, and supposed to haue carried away the fish, but so strongly he drew, that he pulled his taile from his arse, and very hardly scaped with his life. In the meane time it happened that the Lion which was King ouer all beasts, was sore sicke, and the Wolfe thinking to be quit with the fox, went for to see him as his Lord: And when he came there, hee saluted the Lion, saying vnto him thus: My King I salute you, pleaseth it you to know that I haue gone round about the country and Prouince, and in all places of it, for to seeke medicines profitable for you, for to recouer your health, but nothing haue I found good for your sickneſſe, but only the skinne of Reynard the fox, fierce proud and malicious, which is to your body medicinall, but he disdaineth to come hither and see you, but ye may call him to counsell, and when he is come, let his skinne be taken from him, and then let him run whither he will; and that faire skin which is so wholesome, ye shall cause it to be bound vpon your body, and within few daies after, it shall make you in as good health as euer you were. And when he had said these words, he departed from the Lion and took his leaue: but euer he supposed that the fox had heard him, and so he did, for hee was within a target nigh vnto the place, where he heard all the proposition of the Wolfe; to the which he did prouide a remedy, and great preseruation: For as soone

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as the Wolfe was departed from the Lion, the Fox went into the fields, and in the high way he found a great dunghill, within the which hee put himselfe. And when he supposed himselfe to be defiled and dagled enough, he came thus arrayed into the lodge of the Lion, whom he saluted as his soueraigne Lord, saying to him in this manner: Sir King, God giue you good health, and the Lion answered, God saue thee me swæte friend, come neere and kille me, and after I shall tell thee some secret, which I would not that euery one should know. To whom the fox said in this manner, ah sir King be not displeased, for I am foule arrayed and all to dagled, by reason of the great way which I haue gone, seeking all about for some good medicine to helpe you, wherefore it behoueth me not to be so neere your person, for the stinke of the dung would grieue your person, and molest the great sickenesse which you haue: but deere Sir, if it please you, ere euer I come neere to your royall maiestie, I shall bathe and make me cleane, and then I shall come againe, and present my selfe before thy noble person: notwithstanding all this, let it please thee to wit and know, that I come from all the countries hereabout, and from all the realmes adioyning to this prouince, for to see if I could finde some good medicine needfull for thy sickenesse, and to recouer thy health: but certainely I can finde no better counsell than the counsell of an ancient Greek with a great long beard, a man of great wisedome and experience, who told me that in this prouince is a wolfe without a taile, the which hath lost his taile by vertue of the medicine that is in him, for the which thing it is ver-

need

needfull and expedient, that ye make this wolfe to come before you, that by him you may recouer your former health: and when he is come, dissemble and call him to counsell, and say that it shall be much for his worship and profit; and as he shall bee nere vnto you, cast vpon him your armed fet, and as swiftly as ye may, pull the skinne from the body of him, and kepe it whole, saue only ye shall leaue the head and fete, and then let him goe his way to seke his fortune: and forthwith, when yee haue the skinne hot and warme, ye shall bind it about your bodie, and ere long time be passed, your health shall be restored to you againe, and you shall be whole as you were before. And then the Fox toke his leaue of the King, and departed thence againe vnto his tarriar, Howe after came the wolfe to see the Lion, and incontinent the Lion called the wolfe to counsell, and fastened softly his foot on him, and dispoiled the wolfe of all his skinne, saue onely his head and fet, and after the Lion bound it all warme about his bell, and the wolfe ran away skinles, wherefore he had not enough to defend him from the flies, which bered him very sore, and for the great distresse that he felt because of the Flyes that ate his flesh, he was wood, and ranne vnder a hill vpon the which the Fox was. And when the Fox saw him, he began to laugh and marke at the wolfe, saying alonde, why art thou that passest, there with such a faire hed on thy head: and with right faire gloues on thy hands, and shoes on thy fets: stay, stay a while and hearken what I shall say to thee. When thou wentest and camest before the Kings house, thou wert blessed of the Lord,

and

and when thou wast at the Court, thou hadst many good words, and good talking of all the world. And therefore my gossip, be it euill or good, thou must let all passe, and haue patience in thine aduersitie. This fable sheweth vnto vs, that if any hurt, or endamaged by some other, he must not auenge himselfe by his tongue for to make any treason, ne for to say of them any harme or blasphemy, for we ought to consider, that whosoeuer maketh the pit cradle for his brother, oft it hapneth, that he himselfe falleth in the same, and is beaten with the same rod he made for another.

Of the Wolfe which let a fart.

IT is folly to thinke more than a man ought to doe, for whatsoeuer a foole thinketh, it seemeth to him that it shall be so: As it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe, which sometime rose early in the morning, and after he was risen from his couch, he stretched himselfe and let a great fart, and began to say to himselfe, Thanked bee the gods for these good tydings, this day I shall be fortunate and happy, as mine arse singgeth to me. And then he departed from his lodging, and began to walke abroad. And as he went on his way, he found a sacke full of tallow which a woman had let fall, and with his foot he turned it vpside downe, saying to himselfe, I shall not eat thee, for thou shouldest hurt my tender stomacke, I shall fare this day more delicious and farre better I know it well, for mine arse did sing so to me. And with these words he went his way, and anon after he found a great peece of Bacon well salted, which hee turned vpside downe, and when hee had turned and tossed

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it enough, he said, I disdaine to eat of this meate, because it would make me drinke to much, for it is salt: and as mine arse sang to me lately, I shall eat this day better and more delicious meate: and then he began to walke further, & as he entred into a faire meddow, he saw a Mare and her foale with her, and said to himselfe, I render thanks vnto the gods, for the godnesse that they send me, for well I wist, and was certaine, that this day I should find some precious meate. Then he came neere the Mare and said to her. Certainely sister I must eat thy child. And the Mare said, Doe my brother what shall please thee, but first I pray thee doe me one pleasure, I haue often heard say, that thou art a good Surgeon, therefore I desire thee that thou wilt helpe my foot, for as I passed yesterday through the forrest, a thorne entred into my foot behinde, which grieueth me very sore, I pray thee therefore before thou eat my foale to pull the same out of my foot. And the Wolfe said, That shall I gladly doe good Sister, shew me thy foot, And as the Mare shewed the Wolfe her foote she gaue him such a stroke betwixt the eies, that he was astonied and fell flat to the ground, and by this meanes was her foale saued: and a long time after, was the Wolfe lying vpon the earth for dead, and when he was come againe to himselfe, and that hee could speake, he said: I care not for this mishap, for well I wot that yet this day I shall eat and be well filled with delicious meat: & in uttering these words, he lifted vp himselfe, and so departed. And hauing walked a space, he found (by chance) a couple of rams fighting in a meddow, that with their hornes smote

eache other. Then the Wolfe said within himselfe: Blessed be God that now I shall be throughly satisfied. He then came neere the two Rammes and said, Certainly, I shall eat one of you. And one of them said vnto him, My Lord doe all that pleaseth you, but first you must giue vs a sentence of a processe of law which is betwixt vs: And the Wolfe answered, That with right good will he would doe it: And after said vnto them, My Lords tell me your cases, that I may the better giue sentence of your difference and question. And then one of them began to say, My Lord, This meadow was belonging to our Father, and because he died without making any ordinance or testament, we be now in debate and strife for the parting of it: wherefore we pray thee that thou wouldst make an accord betwixt vs, so that peace may be on either side. And then the Wolfe demanded of the Rammes, how their question might be accorded: Right well, said one of them, by the way that I shall tell thee, if thou wilt heare me. We will be at the two ends of the meddow, and thou shalt be in the midst of it, and from the end of the meadow wee both shall run toward you, & he that shall first come to you, shalbe Lord of this meddow, and the last shalbe thine. Well said the Wolfe, Thine aduice is good, and well proposed: Let vs see now who shall come first to me. Then went the two Rams to the end of the meddow, and both at once began to runne toward the Wolfe, and with all their might came and gaue two such vehement strokes, both at once against both his sides, that almost they brake his heart within his belly, and there fell downe the poore Wolfe all astonied, and the

ram

rams went their way. And when hee was come a-gaine to himselfe, he tooke courage, and departed, saying thus vnto himselfe, yet shall I this day eat some good dainty meat. He had not long walked but he found a Sow and her small pigges with her, and incontinent as soone as he saw her he said: Thanks bee to the gods that I shall this day eat and fill my belly with good meat, and shall haue good luck: and in saying that he approached to the Sow, and said to her, My sister, I must eat some of thy young pigges: and the Sow said to him, My Lord, I am content, eat what shall please you, but ere you eat, I pray that they may be baptized, and made cleane in pure and faire water: and the Wolfe said, Shew me the water, and I will wash and baptize them well: then the Sow led him to a riuer where was a faire mill, and as the wolfe was vpon a little bridge of the said mill, and that he would haue taken a pigge, the Sow thrust the Wolfe into the water with her head, and for the swiftnesse of the water, hee must needs passe vnder the wheele of the said mill, but God knowes whether the wings of the mill did beat him well or not, yet as soone as hee might, he ran his way, and as he ran he said to himselfe, I care not for so little shame, sith I shall eat my belly full of delitious meat, as mine arse did sing early to me. And as hee passed through the street he saw some sheepe, and as the Sheepe saw him, they entred into a stable, and when the Wolfe came there, hee said vnto them in this manner, God saue you my sisters, I must eat one of you, to the end that my great hunger may bee fully satisfied. Then said they vnto him, Certainly

my Lord, you are welcome to Masse, for we be come hither to hold a great solemnitie, and therefore we desire you that you pontifically would sing, and after the Service compleate and finished, do your pleasure with one of vs. The Wolfe for vaine-glory, fayning to be a Prelate, began to sing and howle aloud before the sheepe; and when the men of the towne heard the voyce of the wolfe, they came into the stable with great staues, and so layd vpon the Wolfe that he could hardly goe: neuertheless, he escaped and went vnder a great tree, vpon which tree stood a man that hewed downe the boughes thereof. The wolfe then began to sigh sore, and to make great sorrow for his euill hap and said: Ah Iupiter. How many euills haue I had and escaped? But I know it is long of my selfe and by mine owne meanes and proud thoughts; for this day in the morning I found a sack full of Tallow, which I disdained, and anon after that a peece of bacon, which I would not eat for feare of great thirst, and because of foolish conceit: so that the euill that happeneth to me, is rightly bestowed. My father was neuer Physitian, nor Leach, neither haue I euer studied or learned the Science of Physicke, therefore if there happed any euill to me when I would haue drawne the thorne out of the Mares foote, it is well imployed. Also my Father was neither patriarke nor bishop, nor euer knew any letter in the booke, and yet I presumed and tooke vpon me to doe sacrifice, and to sing before the gods, fayning my selfe a Prelate; but after my deserving I was well rewarded: also my Father was neuer Lawyer nor Iustice, and yet I would take vpon

me

mée to be a great Iustice. But I knew neuer neither A. ns B. and therefore the euill that is come to mée is most right. O Iupiter, I am worthy of a very great punishment for my offences. Send thou now to mee from thy high throne a sword, or other weapon, wherewith I may strongly punish and beat my selfe by great penance, for well worthy I am to receiue a greater punishment. Now the good man being vpon the tree, and hearing all these words of the Wolfe, said nothing. And when the Wolfe had made an end of his sighings & complaints, the good man tooke his axe wherewith he had cut away the dead branches of the tree, and cast it vpon the wolfe, and it fell vpon his backe in such manner, that the Wolfe turned vpside downe with his feete vpward, in such sort that he lay as if he had béene stark dead. And after he was reuiued againe, he looked vp toward heauen, and began in this to cry out, Ha Iupiter, I now see well that thou hast heard my prayer. And by earnest looking vp, he espied the man which sate in the tree, and thinking him to be Iupiter, he presently fled toward the forrest as fast as he could, being very sore hurt and wounded: and euer after he became more meeke and humble, than before he was fierce and proud. By this fable men may see, that many things fall out which a foole thinketh not on. And it sheweth to vs, that when any little good hap falleth vnto vs, we ought not to refuse it in hope of better fortune: it likewise sheweth that none are to take vpon them to doe that which they haue no skill to doe.

Of the enuious Dogge.

NO man ought to haue enuy at other mens good fortune, as appeareth by this fable of an enuious dogge which went into a stable of Oxen, because that they should not enter in for to eat of the hay. And then the Oxen said unto him, Thou art euill and peruerse to haue enuy of other mens good, the which is to vs needfull and profitable, for thy kind is not to eat hay. And thus he did of a great bone which he held in his mouth, he would not leaue it, because of the enuy of another dogge being hard by. This fable therefore teacheth us, that it behoueth euery one to kepe himselfe from the company of an enuious person.

Of the Wolfe and the hungry Dogge.

THere be some that think to winne, which often happen to leese, for it is commonly said, that as much spendeth the niggard as the liberall, as it appeareth by this fable, of a man which had a great flocke of sheepe, and also he had a dogge for to kepe them from the Wolues. To this dogge he gaue no meat for the great auarice that he had, and therefore the Wolfe on a day came to the Dogge, and demanded of him the reason why he was so leane, and said unto him, I see well that thou art ready to starue through hunger, by reason that thy master giueth thee no meat by his scarcity, but if thou wilt beleeue me, I shall giue thee good counsell. And the Dogge said to him, Certainly I lacke greatly good counsell. Then the Wolfe said to him, This shalt thou doe, Let me take a Lambe, and when I shall haue it, I shall run a-

way,

away, and when thou seest me, make semblants to run after me, and faine thy selfe that thou canst not ouertake me for lacke and default of meat, which maketh thee so feeble. And thus when the Shepheard shall see that thou maiest not run because of thy great feblenesse and debilitie of body, he shall tell thy Lord that thou maiest not recouer the lambe because thou art so leane and hungry, and by this meane thou shalt haue thy belly full of meat. The dogge then accorded with the Wolfe, and each of them did as aboue said. And when the Shepheard saw the dogge fall, he supposed well that hunger was the cause of it, for the which cause when he came home he told his master, and he vnderstood it he said as a man wroth for shame, I will that from henceforth you giue him bread enough, and then euery day the same dogge, had cops of bread and drie bread enough, whereby he got strength and vigor againe. It hapned within a while after, that the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge and said to him, I perceiue well that I gaue thee good counsell. And the dogge said to the Wolfe, My Brother thou sayest truth, wherefore I thank thee much, for of it I had great neede. And then the Wolfe said to him, If thou wilt, I shall giue thee yet better counsell. And the Dogge answered him, With a very good will I shall heare it, and if it be good I shall doe after it. Then said the Wolfe to him, Giue me leaue to take another Lambe, and doe thou runne after me for to haue it from me, and to bite me, and I shall violently ouerthrow thee with thy feete vpward as he that hath no puissance and strength, and yet notwithstanding all this, I will not hurt thee

beleeue me hardly, and good shall hap to thee. And when thy masters seruants shall haue seene thy diligence they shall shew thy master, how that thou shalt keepe full well his fold, if thou be well nourished. And then the dogge answered the wolfe, that he was content. And as it was said, right so it was done, and both of them made good diligence: the wolfe ranne away with the Lambe, and the dogge ran after and ouertooke him, and bit him faintly, and the Wolfe ouerthrew the Dogge vpside downe to the ground. And when the Shepheard saw the Wolfe giue such strokes vpon the Dogge, the Shepheard said certainely we haue a good dogge, we must tell his diligence to our master, and how he bit the wolfe, and how he ouerthrowne, and yet said certainely, if he had euer meat enough, the wolfe had not borne away the Lambe. Then the Lord commanded to giue him plenty of meat, whereof the dogge took againe all his strength. And within a while, after the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge, and said vnto him in this manner, My brother, haue I not giuen to thee good counsell? And the dogge said, Certainely thou hast, for which I thanke thee. Then the Wolfe said to the Dog, I pray thee my brother, that thou wilt yet giue me another Lambe. And the dog said to him, Certainly my brother it may suffice thee to haue had two of them. Then said the wolfe, at the least thou oughtest let me haue on for my labour and salary. That shalt thou not, said the Dogge hast thou not had good salarie for to haue had two Lambes of my Masters? And the wolfe answered to him againe, My brother, giue it me if it please thee

thee. And the Dogge said, Nay I will not, and if thou takest it against my will, I promise thee, that never after this time thou shalt eat any more. And the Wolfe said, Alas my brother, I dye for hunger, tell me for Gods loue what I shall doe. Then the dogge said to him. I shall confesse thee well; a wall of my maisters celler is fallen downe, goe thou thither this night and enter into it, & there thou maiest both eat and drinke at thy pleasure, for both bread, flesh and wine shalt thou finde there in great plenty. Then the wolfe said to the dogge, Alas my brother, beware I pray thee that thou accuse me not, ne deceiue me. And the dogge answered I warrant thee, but loke thou doe thy feat so priuily that none of my fellowes knew of it. And the wolfe came at night and entred into the celler, and ate and dranke, at his pleasure, insomuch that he wared drunke, and when he was drunke he said to himselfe: When the villaines bee filled with meates, and that they be drunke, they sing, and wherefore should not I sing? And anon he began to cry and houle. Then the dogges heard his voyce and began to barke and howle, and the seruants which heard them said, It is surely the Wolfe which is entred within the celler, and they altogether went thither and killed the Wolfe. Wherefore, more dispendely the niggard than the bountifull, for couetousnesse hath neuer good: for many there be which dare not eat and drinke as nature requireth, but neuertheless, euery one ought to liue prudently, of all such goods as pleaseth God to send them. This fable sheweth also to vs, that no ne ought to doe against his kind, as the Wolfe, which wared drunke, for the

which

which cause he was slaine.

Of the Father and his three children.

HE is not wise which for to have vanitie and his pleasure, maketh debate and strife: As it appeares by this fable. There was a man which had three children, and at the houre of death he bequeathed and gave them his heritage, that is to wit, a Peare tree, a Goat and a Mill. And when the father was dead, the brethren assembled themselves together and went before the Judge, for to part the livelyhood, and said to the Judge, My Lord, Our Father is dead and hath bequeathed unto us three Brethren all his heritage, and one should have as much of it as the other. And then the Judge demanded what was their livelyhoode: And they answered: A Peartree, a Goate and a Mill. And then the Judge said to them, That he that should sit and devide equall your parts, for the one to have as much of it as another, should have a very hard matter to doe, but by your owne advice how would you have it? and then the eldest of the three brethren spake and said, I shall take from the Peartree all that is crooked and right, and the second said, I shall take from the Peartree, all that is greene and dry. And the third said, I shall have all the rote, the pill or mast, and all the branches of the Peartree. And the Judge said to them, He that then shall have the most part of it, let him be Judge, for neither I nor any else can understand or know who shall thereby have the most or least part of it, and therefore he that can prove openly, that he hath the most part, shall be the Lord of the whole tree. Then the Judge demanded of them, have their fa-

ther

ther had demised to them the Coate; and they said to him, He that shall make fairest prayer and request, must have the Coat. And then the first brother made his request and said, I would God that the Coate were now so great, that he might drinke all the water which is under the cope of heaven, and when he had drunke it, he should be yet more thirstie. The second said, I suppose that the Coate shall be mine, for a fairer demand and request than thine is I shall now make: I would that all the Hempe and Flaxe, and all the wooll in the world were made into one thred alone, and that the goate were so great, that with the same thred men might not binde one of the legges. Then said the third, The Coate shall surely be mine, for I would that he were so great, that if an Eagle were at the uppermost part of heaven, he might accupie and have there as much place as the Eagle might looke on in height, length and breadth. And then the Judge said, which of you three have made the fairest prayer, Certainely neither I nor any other can give the iudgement, and therefore the Coate shall be to him that of it shall say the truth. And the Fill, how was it promised by your Father to be parted among you three? They answered the Judge, He that shall be the most lyar, most evill, and most slow, ought to have it. Then said the eldest sonne: I am most slothfull for many yeares past I have dwelled in a great house, and lay under the conduits of the same, where fell upon me all the soule waters: as pisse, dish water, and other filth, that most wonderfully stanke, insomuch that all my flesh was rotten thereof and mine eyes blind, and the dust under my lacke was a

foote

a foot high, and yet by sloth I had rather abide there than to rise vp. The second said, Suppose that the spill shall be mine, for if I came to a table couered with all maner of delicate meats whereof I might eat if I would take of the best, I am so slothfull that I may not eat, without one should put the meat in my mouth. The third said, The spill shall be mine, for I am yet a greater lyar, and more slothfull than any of you both, for if I had thirst vnto the death, and if I found then my selfe within a faire water vp to the necke I would rather die than moove my selfe to drinke one drop thereof. Then said the Iudge. yee wot not what yee say, for neither I, nor any other may well vnderstand you, but the cause I remit among you. And thus they went without any sentence, for to a foolish demand, belongeth a foolish answer; and therefore they be fooles that will plead in such sort one against another, for to a small matter belongeth a small plea.

Of the Wolfe and the Fox.

NOne may be master, except first he haue beene a disciple. As it appeareth by this fable of a fox which came to a wolfe, and said to him, My Lord, I pray ye that ye will be my gossip. And the wolfe answered, I am content. And the fox tooke him his son, praying him that hee should learne his sonne good doctrine, the which the wolfe tooke, and went with him vpon a mountaine, and said to the little Fox, when the beasts come to the field, call mee. And the Fox went and saw from the top of a high hill how all the beastes were comming to the field, wherefore hee called his Godfather and said, My Godfather, the

beasts

beasts come into the field. And the Wolfe demanded of him what beasts they were. The For answered, There be both kin and swine together. Well said the Wolfe, I car not for them, let them goe, for the Dogs be with them. Soon after the For looked on the other side, and perceived a Mare which went to the fields, and he went to his Godfather and said, Godfather, a Mare is gone to the fields. And the Wolfe demanded of him, whereabout is thee? and the For answered, she is by the forrest: and the Wolfe said, now goe we to dinner: and the Wolfe with his godson went into the Forrest, and came to the Mare and perceived a young Colt by her. Then the Wolfe tooke the Colt by the necke, and drew him into the wood, and devoured him betwæne them both: and when they had well eaten, the godsonne said to the godfather, My Godfather, I commend you to God, and much I thanke you for your good doctrine, for ye have taught me well, insomuch that now I am a great clerk, and now I will goe to my mother. Then the Wolfe said to his godsonne, My godsonne, if thou goest away, thou shalt repent thee, for thou hast not yet still studied, neither knowest thou yet thy syllogismes. Nay my good godfather, said the For, I know well all. Then the Wolfe said to him, Sith thou wilt nedes goe, to God I commend thee. And when the For was come to his mother, she said to him, surely thou hast not studied enough, and then he said to his mother, I am so great a Clerke, that I can call the diuell from the cliff. Come let us goe chase, and ye shall see whether I can doe ought or nought. And the young For would have done as his godfather the

Wolfe

wolfe did, and said to his mother, Make a good watch, and when the beasts shall come to the field, let me haue knowledge thereof. And his mother said, well so shall I doe. She made good watch, and when she saw the Kine and the Swine goe to the field, she said unto him, My sonne, the Kine and Swine goe together into the fields: and he answered: My mother for them I care not, let them goe, for the Doggs keep them well: and within a short while after, the mother saw the Mare come nere unto the wood, and said unto her sonne, My sonne, the Mare is nere unto the wood: and he answered. My mother, these be good tidings, abide ye here, for I goe to fetch our dinner: and he entred into the wood, and after would doe as his godfather had done before, and went and tooke the Mare by the necke, but the Mare tooke him with her teeth and bare him to the Shepheard, and the mother cryed from the toppe of the hill, My sonne, let goe the mare and come hither againe, but he might not, for the Mare held him fast with her teeth: and as the Shepheard came to kill him the mother cryed, and said weeping: Alas my sonne, thou didst not learne well and hast ben to litle a while at Schole, wherefore for thy foolish presumption, thou must now die miserably: and the Shepheard tooke and slew him. Mich fable sheweth, that none ought to make himselfe learned except he haue first well studied, for some thinke themselues to be great Clerks, that can doe nothing cleerkly.

Of

Of a man, the old Lion, and his sonne.

He that refuseth the good doctrine of his Father, if euill hap come vnto him, it is both right and reason, as this Fable rehearseth vnto vs: Of a Labourer which sometime liued in a Desart, by his culturing labour. In this Desart also liued a Lyon that wasted and destroyed all the Seed that euery day the said labourer had sowed: and also this Lion destroyed and spoiled his trées. And because he did to him so great harme, he made a hedge, to the which he set cords and nets to take the Lion. And on a certaine time, the Lion came to eat corne, and entred within a nette, and was taken; and then the labourer came thither, and beat him so wonderfully, that scarcely he could escape away with life. And because that the Lion saw that he might not escape the subtilty of the man, he toke his young Lion and went and dwelt in another Region. And within a while after, when the young Lion was growne, and was fierce, and strong, he demanded of his Father, and said; my Father, be we of this Region? Nay, said the Father, for we be fled away from our Land. And the young Lyon demanded of him wherefore? and the Father answered him, for the great subtilty and crafty deuices of the Man. And the young Lion demanded of him, what man it was? And his Father answered and said vnto him; he is nothing so great, nor so strong as we be, but he is farre more subtile and ingenious than we be, making snares to take vs.

And

and the sonne answered to the Father, I shall goe auenge me on him. And the great Lion said to him, Goe not, for if thou goest thither, thou shalt repent thee thereof, and shalt doe like a Foole. And the son answered the Father, By mine head I shall goe thither, and see what he can doe. And as he went to find the man he met an Ore within a meddow, and an horse whose backe was all flaine and sore, to whom he said in this manner, Who is he that hath led you hither, and that so hath hurt you? And they said to him, it is the man. And he said to them, Certainly this is a marueilous thing. I pray you that ye will let me see him. Then they departed and shewed him the Labourer as he eared the earth, and the Lyon without uttering any words passed toward the man, to whom he spake in this manner: Ha man, thou hast done ouer many euils both to me and to my father, and likewise to our beasts: Therefore I tell thee, that to me thou must doe right. And the man said I aduise thee to take hede, for and if thou commest too neare me, I shall kill thee with this great club, and after with this knife I shall flea thee. And the Lion said, Come before my Father, and he as king shall doe vs good iustice. And the man said, I am content if thou wilt sweare to me, that thou wilt not touch me vntill we be in presence of thy Father, and also I shall sweare vnto thee, that I shall goe with thee into the presence of thy father. Thus the Lyon and the man beganne to goe together by the way, where his cords and nets had beene set; and as they passed by the Lion fell into a cord, and by the feet he was taken, so that he could goe no further: then he said,

said to the man, O I pray thee that thou wilt help me, for I may not goe. And the man answered to him, I may not, for I haue sworne vnto thee that I will not touch thee vntill we come before thy father. And as the Lyon supposed to haue vnbound himselfe for to escape he fell into another snare. And then he began to cry after the man, saying, O good man, I pray thee vnbind me. But the man began to strike him vpon the head: and when the Lyon saw that he might not escape, he said to the man, I pray thee that thou smite me no more vpon the head, but vpon the eares, because I would not heare the counsell of my father. And the man began to smite him at the heart and slew him. Therefore we see, that vnto disobedient children many times mis-fortune befalleth.

Of the Knight and his seruant which found the Fox.

MAny there be that for their great leasing suppose to put vnder all the World, but euer at the last their leasings be knowne, as appeareth by this fable, of a Knight which went with an Archer of his through the land, and as they rode they found a Fox, and the Knight said to the Archer. In good sooth I see a great For. And the Archer said, My Lord, marueil you thereat? I haue beene in the region whereas the Fores be as great as Oxen. And the Knight said, In good sooth their skins were good to make mantles with, if skinners might haue them. And as they were riding they fell into many words and deuices, and because the Knight perceiued well the leasing of the Archer, he began to make prayers

to the gods for to make his Archer afraid, and said in this manner, O Iupiter thou great god, I pray thée that this day thou wilt kæpe vs from leasing, so that we may passe safe this great riuer which is here before vs, and that we may safely come to our house. And when the archer heard the prayer of his Lord, he was greatly abashed, and demanded of his Lord, wherefore he praied so deuoutly. And the Knight answered, Wottest thou not well that thou must some passe a great riuer, and that he who all this day shall haue made one leasing, if he enter in, he shall neuer come out againe? Of which words the archer was very dreadfull. And when they had ridden alittle way they found a little riuer. Wherefore the archer demanded of his Lord; Is this the flood which we must passe? No said the Knight, it is greater. O my Lord, I say so, because that the For which you saw, might well haue swimmed ouer this little water. And the Lord said, I care not therefore. And after they had rioden a little further, they found another little riuer, and the archer demanded of him; Is this the flood that ye spake of: Nay said he, for it is greater & broader. And the archer said againe to him: My Lord, I say so, because the For of the which I spake to day, was no greater than a Calfe: and then the Knight hearing the dissimulation of the archer, answered not: and so they rode forth along, till they found yet another riuer. And then the archer demanded of his Lord is that the same? Nay said the knight, but some we shall come thereto. O my Lord, quoth he, I aske, because that the for whereof I spake to you this day, was no greater than a sheepe; and when

they

they had ridden till euening, they found a Riuer of great breadth, and when the Archer saw it, hee began to shake for feare, and demanded of his Lord, My Lord, is this the Riuer? Yea said the Knight, O my Lord said he, I assure you on my faith, that the for of the which I spake to day, was no greater than the for which wee saw to day, wherefore I confesse to you my sinne. And then the Knight began to smile, and said to his archer in this manner, this riuer also is no worse than the riuers which we saw before and haue passed through. Then the archer was ashamed, because hee might no more couer his leasing. Wherefore it is good euer to say the truth, and to practise honest dealing both in word and deed, for the false speeches of a lyar procure his owne shame and contempt among men.

Of the Eagle and the Raven.

NOne ought to take vpon him for to doe a thing which is perilous, except to know himselfe to bee able to doe it, as appeareth by this fable. An Eagle by flying tooke a Lambe, whereof the Rauen had great enuy, and said to himselfe, Wherefore should not I take a Lambe as well as the Eagle: And shortly after, as the Rauen saw a great flock of sharpe passe along by him, he descended very proudly and outragiously on them, and in such manner smot a weather, that the clawes abode in the flesh, by reason whereof he could not fly away. Then the Shepheard came and brake his wings, and tooke him, and after bare him to his children to play withall, and they demanded of him what bird he was. And the Rauen answered to them, I supposed to haue beene an Eagle,

and by my ouer-weening, I thought to haue taken a Lambe as the Eagle did. But now I know well that I am a Rauen. Wherefore the feeble ought not to compare with the strong, for sometime when he supposeth to doe more than he may, he falleth thereby into great dishonor, as appeareth by this present fable of the Rauen, which supposed himselfe to bee as strong as the Eagle.

Of the Eagle and the Wesill.

NO man what might soeuer hee hath, ought to dispraise another, as appeareth by this present fable, of and Eagle which chased sometime after an Hare, and because that the Hare might not resist against the Eagle, he demanded ayd and helpe of the Wesill, which toke her into her keeping, and because the Eagle saw the Wesill so little, he dispraysed her, and by force toke away the Hare, whereat the Wesill was wroth, and went and beheld the nest of the Eagle which was vpon an high tree, and seeing it, climed vp into the tree and cast downe the young Eagles, whereof they died. And for this cause the Eagle was angry, and went with Iupiter, praying him that he would find him a sure place where he might lay his egges and his little chickings, and Iupiter did grant it, and withall gaue him such a gift, that when the time of childing should come, hee should make her yong ones within his bosome. When the Wesill knew this, she gathered together a great quantity of sordure or filth; and thereof made a high hill, for to let her selfe fall from the top of it into the bosome of Iupiter. and when Iupiter felt the stinke, he beganne to shake his bosome, and both the Wesill and

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the egges of the Eagle fell downe to the ground, and thus were all the egges broken and lost: And when the eagle knew it, shee made a vow that shee would neuer make any Eagle, vntill she were thereof assared. And therefore none, how mighty and strong soeuer he be, ought to dispraise another, for there is none so simple, but that he may auenge himselfe either one way or other.

Of the Fox and the Goate.

He which is wise, ought to consider the end before he begin any worke, as appeareth by this fable of a Fox and a goate which sometime descended into a deepe Well for to drinke, and when they had drunke, because they could not come vp againe, the Fox said to the Goate, My friend, if thou wilt helpe me, we shall be sone both out of this Well: for if thou wilt set thy two feete against the wall, I shall well leape vpon thee, and then I shall leape out of the well: and when I shall bee out of it, thou shalt take me by the hand, and I shall draw thee out of the well. And vnto this thing the Goate accorded, and said I will. And then the Goate lift vp his feete against the wall, and the fox did so much as by his subtilty that hee got out of the well, and when he was out, he began to looke downe vpon the Goate which was within the well. And the Goate said vnto him, Helpe me now as thou hast promised. But the Fox began to laugh at him, saying: O master Goate, if thou hadst beene wise, according to the grauity of thy faire beard, thou wouldest ere euer thou haddest entered into this Well, haue taken heed how thou shouldest come forth of it againe. Wherefore he that

will wisely gouerne himselfe, ought euer to take hed to the end of the worke.

Of the Cat and the Chicken.

He that is false by nature, and hath begun to deceiue others will vse his craft still, as it appeareth by this present fable. A Cat there was that sometime tooke a Chicken, the which he began verie greatly to blame, onely that hee might picke a quarrell and eat him, saying vnto him after this manner: Come hither, little chicken, thou doest no good but cry all the night, and keepest me thereby from sleeping. And the Chicken answered, I doe it for thy great profit. Then the Cat said to him, Yet which is worse, thou art an incestuous leacher, for thou knowest naturally both the mother and the daughter: and the Chicken said, I doe it that my master may haue egges for his eating, and my master for his profit, gaue to me both mother and daughter for to multiply the egges. Then the Cat said to him, By my faith gossip thou hast excuses enow, but neuertheless thou shalt passe through my throate, for I purpose not to fast this day for all thy words. Thus it is of him that is accustomed to liue by rauine, for he cannot abstaine from it, for all the excuses that may be made.

Of the Fox and the Bush.

Men ought not to aske helpe of them that be more accustomed to doe euill than good, as it appeareth by this Fable. There was a Fox which for to escape the perill to be taken, troad vpon a thorne which did hurt him sore, wherefore weeping he said to the bush, I am come to thee as my refuge,

refuge, and thou hast hurt mee: And the bush said to him. Thou hast erred and beguiled thy selfe, for thou supposest to haue taken me as thou doest hens and chickens. And therefore men ought not to helpe them which be accustomed to doe euill, but ought rather to hinder them.

Of the Man and his Idoll.

OF the euill man sometime commeth profit to some other though it be contrary to his will, as appeareth by this fable: of a man which had in his house an Idoll, which he often times adored as his God, and the more he prayed to him, the more he failed and became poore, wherefore the man was angry at his Idoll, and toke it by the legs, and smote the head of it so strongly against the wal, that it brake all to peeces, out of which Idoll issued a great treasure, whereof the man was glad and ioyfull. And the man said to the Idoll, Now know I well that thou art wicked, euill and peruerse, for when I worshipped thee thou didst nought for me. Therefore when euill men doe good, it is against their will.

Of a Fisher.

ONce a Fisher piped for to make the fish dance: and when he saw that for no song he could pipe they would dance, he waxed angry, and cast his nets into the water, and toke great store of fish, and when he had drawne his nets to land, the fish began to leape and dance, and then he said vnto them: Certainly it appeareth now well that yée be very euill beasts, for now when ye be taken, ye leape and dance, and before when I piped on my Bagpipe, I could not get you to dance. Therefore it appeareth well

that those things which be done in season, be well done, and by good advice.

Of the Cat and the Rat.

THe man that is wise and hath once beene beguiled, will no more trust him that hath beguiled him, as rehearseth this fable, of a Cat that went into a house where many rats were, which he did eat one after another. And when the Rats perceiued the fiercenesse and crueltie of the Cat, they held a counsell together, whereas they determined with one consent that they should no more come vpon the lower grounds. Wherefore one of them most ancient, said to all the other, My brethren, ye know against whom we may not resist, therefore we must needes hold our selues vpon the vpper balkes, to the end our enemie may not take vs: of the which words the other Rats were well content, and agreed to his counsell. And when the Cat knew the counsell of the Rats, he hung himselfe by his two feete behinde, vpon a pin of Iron which did sticke in a balke, feining himselfe to be dead. Then one of the Rats looking downward, and seeing the Cat so hanging, began to laugh, and said to the Cat, O my friend, if I knew that thou wert dead, I would come downe, but I know thee to be false, and dost but hang so counterfeiting thy selfe to be dead, therefore I will not goe downe. By which we learne, not to trust him the second time, which hath deceiued vs once.

Of the Labourer and the Pielarge.

THe which is taken with the wicked and euill, ought to suffer like paine and punishment. As it appeareth by this fable: Of a Labourer which some-

sometime dressed and set gins for to take the Geese, and also the Cranes which did eat his Corne. It hapned that once in a morning he toke a great many of Geese and Cranes, and a Pielarge among them, which earnestly prayed the Labourer to let him goe, saying that he came not thither to doe any harme. At these words the Labourer began to laugh, and said to the Pielarge, if thou hadst not beene in their fellowship, thou hadst not entred into my net, nor beene taken, but because thou art found and taken with them, thou shalt be punished as they be. Wherefore none ought to keepe company with such as doe evill, unlesse he be willing to be punished as they be for their bad conditions.

Of the child which kept the sheepe.

The man which is accustomed to make leasings, shall not be beleeued when he telleth the truth, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a child which sometime kept sheepe, the which cryed oft without cause, saying, Alas for Gods love succour mee, for the Wolfe will eat my sheepe. And when the Labourers that cultured & eared the earth there abouts heard his crie, they came to him, and did so very often and found nothing, and as they saw that there was no Wolues, they returned againe to their owne labour. Notwithstanding, it hapned on a day that the Wolfe came indeede, and the child cryed as he was accustomed to doe, and because that the labourers had beene oftentimes deceiued, they kept their worke still, and supposed that it was not truth, by reason whereof the Wolfe ranne away with one of the sheepe. Thus we see that men will not lightly beleeue

beleeue him that is knowne for a liar.

Of the Ant and the Columbe.

NOne ought to be ingratefull for the benefites which hee receiueth of another, as rehearseth this Fable, of an Ant which came to a Fountaine to drinke, and as she would haue drunke, she fell into the Fountaine, wherein she thought to haue béene drowned without helpe, and the Columbe tooke a branch of a tree, and cast it to saue her selfe, and then the Ant went anon vpon the branch and saued her selfe. Then came the falconer which would haue taken the said Columbe, and the Ant séeing the Falconer preparing his Nets, came to his foote, and so fast pricked him, that she caused him to smite the earth with his foote, and there with made so great a noise that the Columbe heard it, and withall flew away before the gins and nets were set. Wherefore none ought to forget the benefit which he hath receiued of some other: for ingratitude is a great sinne.

Of the Bee and Iupiter.

THe cuill that a man sheweth to another, commeth to himselfe, as appeareth by this fable of a Bée which offered vnto Iupiter a peece of Hony, whereof Iupiter was much ioyfull, and said to the Bée, Demand of me what thou wilt, and I shall giue it thée. Then the Bée prayed him in this manner, O Iupiter, I pray thee that thou wilt grant me that whatsoeuer shall come to take away my Honey, if I sting him, he may suddenly dye. And because that Iupiter loued the humane linage, he said to the Bée, Let it suffice thee that whosoeuer shall take thy hony, if thou sting or pricke him, incontinent thou shalt die:

dia : and thus her request was turned to her owne harme. Wherefore men ought not to demand of God any thing that is vnhonest or vniust.

Of the Carpenter and of Mercury.

By how much God is more mercifull and benigne to the good and holy, so much the more he punisheth the wicked and euill, as we may see by this fable, of a Carpenter which cut wood by a riuer for to make a Temple to the gods. And as he cut wood, his Axe fell into the water, wherefore he began to weepe, and to call to the gods for helpe : and the god Mercury for pitty apeared to him, and asked him wherefore he wept, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and asked of him if that were the Axe which he had lost. And he said nay : then the god shewed him another Axe of siluer, and he semblably said : and because Mercury saw that he was good and true, he drew his Axe out of the water, and gaue it him, and much good beside her gaue him. And the Carpenter told this story to his fellowes, of the which one of them came to the same place to cut as his fellow did before, and let fall his Axe into the water and began to weepe, and to demand helpe and ayd of the gods ; Whereupon Mercury appeared before him, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and demanded of him saying, Is this same it that thou hast lost ? And he answered to Mercury and said, Yea sayre Sir and mighty god, that same is it : and Mercury seeing the malice of the villaine, gaue to him neither the one nor the other, but left him weeping for his owne Axe. Thus God which is good and iust, rewardeth all good men in this world, euery one after his

his deserving, and punisheth the euill and vniust.

Of the young theefe and his mother.

THe child which is not chastised in the beginning will proue euill and peruerse in the end: as we may perceiue by this Fable. There was a yong child which in his youth began to steale, and all that he did steale he brought to his mother, and the mother toke it gladly, and would in no wise correct him and after he had stollen many things, he was taken and condemned to be hanged, and as men led him to the Iustice, his mother followed him and wept sore: And then the child prayed the Iustice that he might say some what to his mother, and hauing leaue, he approached to her, & making as though he would speake to her in her eare, with his teeth he bit off her nose: for which when the Iudge blamed him, he answered in this manner, My Lord, she is the cause of my death, for if thee had well chastised mée, I had not come to this shame. By which fable we may learne, that it is better for parents to chastise their children being young, than to be grieued by them when they are old.

Of the Flea and the Man.

EVery little euill is to be punished, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man which tooke a flea that bit him, to whom he said: Flea, why biteſt thou me, and wilt not let me scape? And the flea answered, It is my kind to doe so. Wherefore I pray thee put me not to death. And the man began to laugh and said, Thou canst not hurt me greatly, neuertheleſſe, onely for biting mée, thou shalt die. Therefore small euils are not to be suffered.

Of

Of the Husbandman and his two Wives.

NOthing is worse to a man than a women, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man of meane age that had two wiues, that is to say, and old and a young, which were both dwelling in his house, and because that the old desired to haue his loue, shee pulled the blacke haires from his head, because hée should be the more like to her: and the young woman on the other side pulled out all the white haires, to the end that he should seeme the younger, & more faire in her sight. And thus the good man abod without any haire on his head. And therefore it is great folly for an ancient man to marry againe: or for any man to place his affection on two women at once, and to seeke to please them both.

Of the Labourer and his children

HE that laboureth continually, is likely to bée rich in substance. as appeareth by this Fable. There was a labouring man which had diligently wrought all his life time, and was thereby waxen rich; and when he should die, he said to his children. My treasure I haue left in my Vine: And after that this good man was dead, his children supposing that his treasure had beene hid in his Vine, did nothing all day but delue, and it baze more fruit than it did before: for who so trauelleth well, he hath euer bread enough for to eate, and he that worketh not, dyeth for hunger,

Here endeth the subtile Fables
of Esop.

Here

Here begine the Fables of Auian.
right pleasant to read.

The first Fable is of the old Woman and the Wolfe.

Euery kind of spirit is not to be beleeued by us, as appeareth by this Fable, of an old woman, which saith vnto her child because it wept: Certainly if thou weepest any more, I shall make the Wolfe to eat thee. The Wolfe hearing this old woman say so, abode still at the gate, and supposed to haue the child to eat, and when the Wolfe had tarryed there so long that he was hungry, he returned againe to the wood, and the shee Wolfe demanded of him, Why hast thou brought me no meat? and he answered, The old women hath beguiled me, which promised me her child to eat, and at the last I had it not. Therefore men ought not to put any great confidence in a womans speeches.

The second Fable is of the Tortesse and of the other Bird.

He that exalteth himselfe more than he ought to doe, seldome commeth to good, as appeareth by this Fable, of a Tortesse which said to the birds, If ye lift me vp very high from the ground into the aire, I shall shew to you great plenty of precious stones. Then the Eagle toke her, and bare her so high that she might not see the earth, and said to her, Shew me

now

now the precious stones that thou promisedst to shew me: and because the Mortesse might not see the earth, and that the Eagle knew well that he was deceiued, he thrust his clawes into the Mortesse belly, and killed him. By which fable we learne, that he which will haue worship and glory, may not get it without great labour: therfore it is better and more sure for a man to keepe himselfe lowly, than to exalt himselfe on high, and after to die shamefully: for it is a common saying. Who so mounteth higher than he should, falleth suddenly lower than he would.

The third Fable is of the two Creuisses.

The man which will vndertake to teach other, ought first to examine and correct himselfe, as it appeareth by this fable of a Creuise, which would haue chastised her owne daughter, because that shee went not right, and said to her, My daughter, it pleaseth me not that ye goe thus backward, for thereby thou maiest come to some harme. And the daughter said to her, My mother, I shall goe right and forward with a good will, if ye will goe before to shew me the way: But the mother could goe none otherwise but after her kind, wherefore the daughter said to her, My mother learne first your selfe for to goe right and forward, and then ye may teach me. Wherefore he that will teach other, ought first to shew good example himselfe, for great shame it is for a Doctor to haue his owne faults accuse him.

The fourth Fable is of the Asse and the Lyons skin.

None ought to glory in the goods of other, as rehearseth this Fable of an Asse, which sometime

time found the skinne of a Lyon, which he did weare on him, but he could neuer hide his eares therewith. And when he was (as he supposed) well arrayed with the said skinne, he ranne into the forrest, and when the wilde beasts saw him come, they were fearefull and began to flie, for they thought it had beene the Lyon. And the master of the Asse sought his Asse vp and downe in euery place, and when he had long sought him, he thought he would goe to the forrest, and as he was in the forrest, he met his Asse arrayed as is before said. But his master which had sought him so long, saw his eares, whereby he knew him well, and anon he tooke him, and said in his manner: Ha ha, master Asse, are ye clothed with the Lyons skin? thou makest the beasts afraid, but if they knew thee as well as I doe, they would not feare thee, but I assure thee that well I shall beat thee for this. Then hee tooke from him the skinne of the Lion and said to him, Lyon thou shalt be no more, but Asse shalt thou euer be, and his master so beat him with a cudgell, that euer after hee remembred it. Therefore hee which aduanceth himselfe of other mens goods, is a very foole, for as men say commonly, hee is not well arayed, which is clothed with another mans gowne.

The fift fable is of the Frogge and the Fox.

IT is great folly for any man to attempt to doe that which he cannot doe, as by this fable appeareth. A Frogge sometime came out of a ditch, and presumed to leape vpon a high Mountaine and when

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the was vpon the high mountaine, the said to the other beasts, I am a Mistresse in medicine, and can giue remedie to all manner of sickneſſe by my art and subtilty, and shall render you good health, whereof some beleeued her. Then the Fore which perceiued the foolish beleefe of the Beasts, began to laugh and said to them; Poore Beasts, how may this foule and venimous beast which is sicke and pale of colour, render and giue to you health? for the Leach that will heale some other, ought first to helpe himselfe; for many counterfeit the Leach, which cannot a word of the science of medicine, from the which I pray God to keep you.

The 6. Fable is of the Dogge.

HE that is vaine glorious of that which should humble him, is a very foole, as by this Fable most plainely appeareth. There was a man which had two dogs, of the which one without barking vsed to bite the folke, and the other barked, but did not bite. And when the maister of the house perceiued the malice of the dogge which barked not, he hung about his neck a bell, to the end that men should beware of him: Wherefore this Dogge was very proud thereof, and began to dispraise all other dogges: for the which one of the most ancient said vnto him, O foolish beast, now perceiue I well thy folly and great madneſſe in thinking that this Bell is giuen thee for thine owne desert and merit, for certainly it is not so, but it is taken to thee for demerite, and because of thy shrewdneſſe and great treason, for to shew that thou art false and a traitour. Whereby we learne, that none ought to be ioyfull of that thing,

whereof he ought to be sorrowfull, as many fooles be: for a great fole were that theefe, which being led to be hanged, with a cord of gold about his neck, if he should make ioy thereof, although the cord were very rich and costly.

The seuenth Fable, is of the Camell and of Iubiter.

EVery creature ought to be content with that that god hath giuen him, without taking the inheritance of others, as appeareth by this fable of a Camell which sometime complained to Iupiter, of the other beasts that mocked him, because he was not beautifull as they were, wherefore instantly he prayed to Iupiter in this manner: Faire sir and mighty god, I pray thee that thou wilt giue me hornes, that I may be no more mocked. Iupiter then begunne to laugh, and in stead of hornes, he toke from him his eares, saying, Thou hast more good than it behoueth thee to haue, and because thou demandest that which thou oughtest not to haue, I haue taken from thee that which thou oughtest to haue: For no man ought to desire more than he ought to haue, lest he thereby leese that which he hath.

Fable viii. of two fellowes.

MEn ought not to hold fellowship with him which is accustomed to beguile other, as appeareth by this present fable of two fellowes which sometimes held fellowship together, to goe both by mountaines and valies: and for to make better their voiage, they were sworne each to other, that none of them both should leaue other vntill death should part them. And as they walked in a Forrest, they

they met with a great wild Beare, and they both ran away, for feare of the which, one of them clymed up into a tree; and when the other saw that his fellow was gone and left him, he laid himselfe downe on ỹ earth, and fained him to be dead. Incontinent the Beare came for to eate him, but because the gallant plaid well his game, the Beare went forth on his way and toucht him not: and then his fellow came downe from the tree and said vnto him, I pray thee tell me what the Beare said to thee: and his fellow said, He taught me many faire secrets, but among all other things he said to me, That I should neuer trust him which hath once deceiued mee.

Fable ix. of two Pots.

THe poore ought not to take the rich for his fellow, as appeareth by this fable of two Pots, of which one was of copper, and the other of earth, the which did meete together in the riuer, and because that the earthen pot went swifter than did the copper pot, the copper pot said, I pray thee let vs goe together, and the earthen pot answered, I will not goe with thee, for if thou shouldest chance to hit me, thou wouldest breake me in peeces. Therefore the poore is a foole that compareth himselfe with the rich, for better it is to liue in pouerty, than to die villainously and be oppressed of the rich.

Fable x. of the Lion and the Bull.

TIme serueth not a man allwaies to reuenge himselfe vpon him that hath done him any iniury:

as appeareth by this present fable, of a Bull which sometime fled before a Lion, and as the Bull would haue entered into a tauerne for to saue him, a Goate came against him to let him that he should not enter, to whom the Bull said: It is not time now to auenge me on thee, for the Lion chaseth me, but the time shall come that I shall finde thee out. Wherefore that man is not wise, which to be presently reuenged on his enemy, will bring himselfe into more perill and danger.

The 11. Fable is of the Ape and his sonne.

THere is no greater folly than for a man to praise himselfe, as rehearseth this present Fable, of Iupiter chiefe of the gods, which made all the beasts and birds for to be assembled together for to know their kind. Therewith came forth the Ape. which presented his sonne to Iupiter, saying thus: Faire sir and mighty god, loke and see here the faireſt beast that euer thou createdst in this world. Hereat Iupiter began to laugh, saying vnto him: Thou art a foule beast thus for to praise thy selfe. For none ought to praise himselfe, but ought to doe good and vertuous works, for the which other men may giue him praise and commendation.

The 12. Fable is of the Crane and the Peacocke.

THough a man bee neuer so excellent in any science, yet it is folly in him to praise himselfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Peacock which sometime made a dinner to a Crane, and when they had eaten and dronken enough, they had much talke together: wherefore the Peacocke said to the Crane,

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Thou haſt not ſo faire a forme, nor ſo faire feathers as I haue. To whom the Crane anſwered & ſaid, It is truth: neuertheleſſe, thou haſt not ſo good and faire a uertue, as I haue. For albeit that I haue not ſo faire feathers as thou haſt, yet I can flie better than thou thy ſelfe canſt, for with thy faire feathers thou muſt euer abid on the earth, but I can flie euen where it pleaſeth me. Thus euery one ought to be content with that gift which nature hath beſtowed on him, without making any vaine boaſt thereof.

Fable 13. of the Hunter and the Tyger.

FArre worſe is the ſtroake of a tongue, than the wound of a ſpeare, as appeareth by this preſent Fable: Of a Hunter which with his arrowes hurt the wild beaſt in ſuch wiſe that none eſcaped him: to the which beaſts a Tygre fierce and hardy ſaid in this manner; Be not afraid ſo, for I ſhall keepe you well. And as the Tygre came to the wood, the Hunter was hid within a buſh, and when he ſaw the Tygre paſſe before him, he ſhot at him an arrow and hit him in the thigh, whereof the Tygre was greatly abaſhed, and weeping and ſore ſighing, ſaid to the other Beaſts, I wot not from whence this commeth vnto me. And when the Fox ſaw him ſo greatly abaſhed, all laughing he ſaid vnto him, Ha, ha Tygre, thou art wonderfull mighty and ſtrong. Then the Tygre ſaid to him, My ſtrength auaileth me not at this time. for none may keepe himſelfe from treaſon. And therefore ſome ſecret is here which I knew not before. Yet not withſtanding, this I may well auouch, that there is no worſe arrow, nor

that hurteth a man more than the arrow that is shot from an euill tongue. For when some person proffereth or saith some word in the fellowship of some honest man of good life, all the fellowship supposeth that that which this euill tongue hath said; is true, albeit that it be not leasing. But notwithstanding the good man shall euer be wounded of the same arrow, which wound shall be vncurable. And if it were the stroake of a speare, it might be vn a Surgion healed, because that incontinent as the word is spoken, hee that said it is no more master of it. And for this cause the stroake of the tongue is most dangerous and vncurable.

Fable xiiii. of the foure Oxen.

MEn ought not to breake their faith with their good friend, nor to leaue his fellowship, as it appeareth by this fable of foure Oxen which were all in a faire greene meadow. And because that they euer kept them together, none other beast durst assaile them, and also the Lion dreaded them much. The which Lion on a day came to them, and by his deceiueable words thought for to beguile them, and to take them the better, made them to be seperated each from other: and when they were seperated, the Lion went and toke one them, and when the Lion would haue strangled him. the Ox said vnto him, Gossip, hee is a foole that beleeueth false and deceiueable words, and leaueth the fellowship of his good friend; for if we had beene euer together, thou hadst not taken me: and therefore he which is safe & standeth well and sure, ought to looke to himselfe that

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he fall not through his owne folly.

Fable xv. of the Bush and the Auber tree.

NOne for his beautie ought to dispraise any other for sometime such a one as is faire, soone wareth foule, and from high falleth low, as it appeareth by this Fable, of a faire tree which mocked and scorned a little bush, and said: Seest thou not the faire beautie of me? With me men edifie and build faire houses palaces, castels, galleies, and diuers other ships for to saile on the sea, thus he aduanced and praised himselfe. Then came there a Labourer with his axe for to hew and smite him to the ground. And as the Labourer smote vpon the faire tree, the bush said, Certainely my brother, if thou wert as little as I am, men should not hew ne smite thee to the ground. Wherefore none ought to reioyce himselfe of his Worship, for he that is now in great honour and worship, hereafter may fall into as great shame and dishonor.

Fable. xvi. Of the Fisher and the little Fish.

MEn ought not to leaue the thing that is sure and certaine, in hope of the vncertaine, as to vs rehearseth this Fable, of a fisher which with his line toke a little fish; which said to him, My friend I pray thee that thou wilt not put me to death, for now I am tough to eat, but when I shall be greater if thou come hither, of me thou shalt haue more good, for then I shall serue thee a good while. And the fisher said, Sith that I now haue thee, thou shalt not escape from me, for great folly it were in me to seeke thee here another time. For men may

not to let goe that whereby they be sure, hoping to haue afterward that which is vncertaine.

Fable 17. of Phœbus, the auaricious and the couetous Man.

NOne ought to damage himselfe, to the end he may hurt another the more, as it appeareth by this fable of Iupiter which sent Phœbus into the earth, to haue all the knowledge of the thought of men. This Phœbus chanced to méete with two men, of the which one was enuious, and the other right couetous. Phœbus demanded of them what their thought was. We thinke, said they to demand of thée great gifts. To the which Phœbus answered, Demaund now what ye will, for all that ye shall aske me, I shall grant it you; and of that which the first shall aske, the second shall haue double, or as much more againe. And then the auaricious said, I will that my fellow aske what he will first: whereof the enuious was well content, and said vnto Phœbus, Faire sir, I pray thée that I may lése one of mine eies. Wherefore Phœbus began to laugh, and departed againe to Iupiter, and told him the great malice of the enuious, which was ioyfull and glad of the harme and damage of another, and how he was content to suffer paine, for to damage some other.

Fable 18. of the theefe and the child that wept.

HE is a fole that putteth his goods in ieapardie to be lost, in hope to get more: as appeareth by this Fable, of a thefe which found a child weeping besides a Well, of whom the thefe demanded why he

he wept. And the child answered, I wepe because I haue let fall into this well a Bucket of gold. And then the theefe, toke off his clothes, and laid them on the ground, and went downe into the Well: and when he was downe, the child toke his clothes and went away, leauing him in the Well. Wherefore none ought to leaue that which he hath, in hope for to get that which he hath not: and those things neuer come to good, which are gotten by bad meanes.

Fable 20. of the Lion and the Goat.

That man is wise which can kepe himselfe from the wily and false, as appeareth by this Fable: Of a Lion which met with a Goate which was vpon a Mountaine: and when the Lion saw her, he said to her in this manner, for to giue her occasion to come downe from the hill, to the end that he might eate her. My sister, why commest thou not hither into this faire greene meadow, for to eat of these faire hearbes or grasse? And the Goat answered him, Albeit that thou sayest truth, yet neuertheless sith thou speakest it, neither for my good nor profit, but onely that thou mightest eat and deuoure me, I meane not to trust thy faire speeches: for many times, I haue heard say of my damme, He that is well, let him not seeke to amend himselfe: and he which is in a sure place, is a fole if he goe from it, and put himselfe in danger and perill, in hope of better fortune.

Fable

The xxi. Fable, of the Crow which was a thirst.

BEtter is wit than force, as rehearseth this Fable, of a Crow which came to drinke out of a bucket, and because that she might not reach to the water, she filled the Bucket with small stones, insomuch that the water came vpwards, whereof she did drinke at pleasure. Whereby we vnderstand, that wisedome is more to be commended than any worldly might, and by Sapience men may resist great euill.

The xxii. Fable, of the villaine, and of the young Bull.

HE which is of an euill nature, shall haue great paine to amend his conditions, as appeareth by this fable, of a villaine which had a young bull, the which he might not binde, because that euer he smote with his hornes, wherefore the villaine cut off his hornes. But when hee would haue bound him, the Bull cast his fet from him, in such wise that he suffered no man to come nere him. And when the villaine perceiued the malice of the Bull, he said vnto him, I shall chastise thee well enough, for I shall put thee into the butchers hands: and then the Bull indeede was chastised. Thus ought men to doe with wicked and rebellious people, which giue themselues to all kinde of euill, namely, to put them into the hangmans hands, and to let him bee their butcher to rule them, for otherwise their accustomed conditions will more and more spread to the corrupting of better disposed persons among whom they liue.

The

The xii. Fable, is of the Palmer and of the Satyre.

MEn ought to beware of them which beare both fire and water, as rehearseth this fable. Of a Pilgrime which walked in the Winter throw a great Forrest, and because that the Snow had couered all the waies, he wist not whither he went. Against whom came a Woodwose named Satyre, because he saw him cold; which approached to the Pilgrim, and brought him to his pit: and when the Pilgrim saw him, he had great dread, because that a woodwose is a monster like a man. And as this Satyre led this pilgrim into a pit, the Pilgrime did blow his hands for to heate them, for he was sore a-cold and the woodwose gaue him hot water to drinke, and when the Pilgrime would haue drunke it, he began to blow it. And the woodwose demanded of him, why he did blow it. And the Pilgrime said, I blow it to make it somewhat more cold. The woodwose then said to him, Thy fellowship is not good for me, because that thou beareſt both fire and water in thy mouth: Therefore go hence from my pit, and neuer returne againe: for the fellowship of the man which hath two tongues is naught. Wherefore the man that is wise, ought to flie the fellowship of flatterers, for by flattering and adulation, many haue beene deceiued.

The xiii. Fable is of the Ox and of the Rat.

LOrds ought to loue their subiects, for he which is hated of his tenants and subiects, is not Lord of his

his hands. As it appeareth by this preſen fable, of an Ore which ſometime was within a ſtable, and as the Ore on a time would faine haue ſlept, a Katt came & bit him by the thighes, and as the Ore would haue ſmitten him, he ran away into his hole. And then the Or began to menace the Kat, and the Kat ſaid to him, I am not afraid of thee, albeit I am little, I may impeach thee. And if thou art great, thank thy parents becauſe thereof and not thy ſelfe; and therefore the ſtrong ought not to diſpraiſe the little, but to loue him, as the chiefe or head ought to loue his limmes: for he that loueth not, ought not to be loued: and therefore the Lord muſt loue his ſubiects, if of them he would be loued.

Fable 24. of the Gooſe and her Lord.

He that ſeeketh to get more than he ought, oftimes getteth nothing, as ſaith this fable, of a man which had a Gooſe that laid euery day an egge of gold. The man, of couetouſneſſe commanded her that euery day ſhe ſhould lay two egges. And ſhe ſaid to him, certainly my maſter I may not. Wherefore the man was wroth with her, and ſlew her: by meanes whereof he loſt his former profit, and afterward ware very ſorrowfull: Howbeit it was not time to ſhut the ſtable dore when the horſes be gone: and he is not wiſe which ouer raſhly doth any thing whereof he ſhall repent him afterward, nor he that hurteth himſelfe to be auenged on ſome other. For becauſe he ſuppoſed to win all, he loſt all.

Fabl

Fable 25. of the old Ape and her two children.

He that sometimes the parents doth dispraise, oftentimes proueth the best child, as appeareth by this Fable, of an Ape which had two children, of the which she hated the one and loued the other, and that shee loued shee toke in her armes and fled before the dogges. And when the other saw that his mother left him behinde, he ran and leapt on her backe, and by reason that the little Ape which shee held in her armes hindred her flight, shee let it fall to the ground, and the other which the mother hated, held fast on her backe and was saued, the which from henceforth kissed and embraced his mother, and shee then began greatly to loue him. Wherefore many times it happeth, that thing which is dispraised and hated, is better than that thing which is loued and praised. And many times the children which be praised and loued, doe lesse good than they which be dispraised and hated.

Fable 26. of the Winde and the earthen Pot.

The man that ouermuch exalteth himselfe, shall be abased, as appeareth by this fable, of a Potter which made a great pot of earth, which he set in the sun, that it might be better dry, and against this pot there came a great wind. And when the wind saw the Pot, he demanded, Who art thou?

and

and the Pot answered, I am a pot the best made that can be found, and none may inpeach me. How said the Wine? Thou art yet all soft, and hast neither vertue ne force, and because I know thy great pride, I shall breake thee in peeces, to the end that thou maist haue knowledge of thy great pride. And therefore the feeble ought to be meeke, and humble himselfe, and shew obeisance to his Lord, and not to exalt himselfe more than he ought, to the end that he be not abased.

Fable xxvii. of the Wolfe and the the Lambe.

OF two euills men ought euer to eschew the worst if any of them may be eschewed, as it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe which ran after a Lambe, the which Lamble fled into the house whereas the Goates were; and when the wolfe saw that he might in no wise take the Lambe, he said to him by sweete words, Leaue thy fellowship, and come with me into the fields; for if thou come not, thou shalt bee taken with them, and being taken, shalt be sacrificed to their gods. And the Lambe answered to the Wolfe, I had rather to shed all my bloud for the loue of the gods, and to be sacrificed to them, than to be beaten and deuoured of thee. And therefore he is full of wisedome and prudence, who of two great euills, may escape the greatest of both.

Here end the Fables of Avian

Here

Here followeth the pleasant Fables of Alfonce.

The first Fable is of the exhortation of Sapience and loue.

Rabe of Lucane said to his sonne in this manner: My sonne, beware that the Ant be no more prudent than thy selfe, which gathereth and assembleth together in the summer, all he needeth to haue in the winter, and beware that thou sleep no longer than the Cocke doth, which watcheth and awaketh early in the morning, and that he be not wiser than thy selfe, which ruleth and gouerneth nine Hennes. But it sufficeth that thou rule and gouerne one well: and also that the dogge be not more noble than thy selfe, which forgetteth not that good which is done to him, but euer he remembreth it. Besides, my sonne, suppose it not a small matter to haue a good friend, but doubt not to haue a thousand friends. And when Arabe would dye, he demanded this question of his sonne, saying: My sonne, how many good friends hast thou? And the Sonne answered his Father, and said, My father, I haue as I suppose many to be my friends. Then said his father, Account none to be thy friends vnlesse thou hast well assayed and proued them before. For I assure thee, I haue lined longer in this world than thou hast, and yet I haue gotten scarcely halfe a Friend, wherefore I maruell much how

thou haſt gotten ſo many friends. And then the ſonne ſeeing the admiration or wonder of his Father, demanded of him, My father, I pray you giue me your counſell, how I ſhall now allay my Friend. And his father ſaid to him, Goe thou and kill a Calfe, and put it in a ſacke all bloudy and beare it to thy firſt Friend, and ſay to him, It is a man which thou haſt ſlaine, and deſire him for the loue which he beareth to thee, that he will keepe thy miſdeedes ſecretly, and burie it, to the end that thou mayeſt be ſaued: this counſell his ſonne followed: to whom his friend ſaid, Returne againe, for within my houſe thou ſhalt not enter, If thou haue done euill, I will not beare the penalty of it. And thus one after another he aſſaied all his friends, and euery one of them anſwered him as the firſt; whereof he was greatly abaſhed, & returned againe to his father, and told him how he had ſped: and his father ſaid, Many be friends in words, but few in deedes, but I ſhall tell thee what thou ſhalt doe. Goe thou to my halfe friend, & beare to him thy calfe, and thou ſhalt heare what he will ſay to thee. When the ſonne came to the halfe friend of his Father, he ſaid to him as he did to the other. And when the halfe friend vnderſtood the matter, he tooke him ſecretly into his houſe, and ledde him into an obſcure place for to burie his dead calfe, whereby the Sonne knew the truth of the halfe friends loue. Then the ſonne of the Arabe turned againe to his Father, and told him all that his halfe friend had done to him. Then the Father ſaid to his ſonne, that the Philoſopher ſaid, that the true friend is found in extreame neede: Then demanded the ſon of his Father Saweſt thou neuer a

man

man which in his life time did get a whole friend? And his father replied and said, I neuer saw any, but I haue heard of such a one: and the sonne answered, My father, I pray thee that thou wilt reueale it to me, to the end that by aduenture I may get such a one. Then the father said vnto his sonne after this manner: My sonne, sometime I haue heard of two merchants which neuer beheld each other, the one was of Egypt, and the other of Baldocke, but they had certaine knowledge each of other by their Letters, which they wrote friendly one to the other. It so befell that the merchant of Baldocke came into Egypt to cheapen and buy some ware, whereof his friend was glad, and went to meet him, and brought him louingly to his house. And after he had cherred and refreshed him by the space of fourteene dayes, the same merchant of Baldocke became very sicke, whereof his friend was rightly sorrowfull, and incontinent sent for the best Physicions and Leaches that were in all Egypt, to recouer his health: and when the Physicions had seene and visited him, and well regarded his vrine, they said that he had no bodily sickneſſe, but that he was rauished with loue: and when his friend heard these words, he came vnto him, and said, My friend, I pray thee that thou shew me thy sickneſſe: then his friend said to him, I pray thee that thou wilt bring hither all the women and maidens that be in thy house, to see if she that my heart most desireth bee amongst them: And anon his friend brought before him, both his owne daughters, and all his seruants, amongst whom was a faire young maiden which hee had nourished for his

pleasure: And when the sicke man saw her, he sayd to his friend, This same is the which may be the only cause of my life or death: which his friend hearing, gaue her vnto him to be his wife, with all such good as he had of hers, whom hee wedded, and returned vnto Baldocke, with great ioy. But within a while after, it fortuned so that this Merchant of Egypt fell into great pouerty, and to haue some consolation or comfort, hee toke his iourney towards Baldocke, and supposed to goe and see his friend, and euen about one of the clocke he arriued in the Citie: and insomuch as he was not well arrayed, hee was ashamed by day light to goe into the house of his friend, but went and lodged him within the Temple nigh to his friends house. It hapned then that on the same night that he lay there, there was a man slaine before the gate of the same Temple: wherefore the neighbours were sore troubled, and the people moued therewith, went into the Temple, where they found no body saue onely the Egyptian, the which they toke, and demanded of him whether hee had slaine the man which lay dead before the Portall of the Temple. He then seeing his misfortune and pouartie, confessed he had killed the man, for because of his evill chance, he would rather die than liue: whereupon hee was led before a Iudge, and was condemned to be hanged. And as men led him towards the gallowes, his friends saw him and knew him, and began to weepe, remembring the benefits that hee had done vnto him: forthwith he went vnto the Iustice, and said: My Lord this man did not the murder, for it was my selfe that did it, and therefore you

should

should doe great sinne, if you doe put this guiltlesse man to death. And anon hee was taken to be had to the gallowes. And the Egyptian said, My Lord he did it not, and therefore euill should you doe to put him to death. And as the two friends would haue beene hanged each for other, he which had done the murther indeede, came and confessed there, openly the fact and addressed himselfe before the Justice, and sayd, My Lord, none of them both haue done the deede, and therefore punish not these innocents, for I alone ought to beare the paine. Whereat the Justice greatly marueled, and for the doubt which therin was great, the Justice tooke them all three, and led them before the King. And when they had rehearsed to the King all the manner, after enquest thereupon made, and that he knew the truth of it, he granted his grace to the murtherer, and so all the three were deliuered. Then the friend brought his friend to his house, and receiued him ioyfully, and after gaue unto him both siluer and gold, and the Egyptian returned againe to his house. And when the father had rehearsed all this, his sonne said to him, My father, I know well that he that may get a good friend is happy, and with great labour I suppose I shall finde such anone.

The ii. Fable is of money delivered to keepe.

A Spaniard arriued sometime in the Land of Egypt, and because that hee feared to be robbed passing through the desart of Arabia, he thought in himselfe, that it were wisely done to deliuer his mo-

ney to some true man, to kæpe vntill his returne againe. And because that he had heard some say, that within the City was a true man, he went anon vnto him, and toke to him his siluer for to kæpe it. And when hée had done his voyage, hée came againe to him, and demanded of him his siluer: and hée answered him in this manner: My friend, I know not who thou art, for I neuer saw thée before that I wot of, and if thou sayest or speakest any moe words, I shall make thée to be well beaten. Then was the Spaniard sorrofull and wroth, and thereof he made a complaint to his neighbours, and the neighbours said vnto him, Certainly we be greatly abashed of that ye tell vs, for he is among vs all reputed and holden for a good man and a true. and therefore returne againe vnto him, and with faire words demand of him that he may render vnto thée thy coyne againe: the which thing he did. And the old man answered him more sharply and more rigorously than hée had done before, wherewith the Spaniard was wonderfully wroth: and as he departed out of the old mans house, hée met with an old woman, the which demanded of him the cause why he was so troubled and heauie. And after he had told her the cause why, the old woman said to him: Make good cheere, for if it be as thou sayst, I shall giue thée counsell how thou shalt recouer thy siluer. Then he demanded of her, how it might be done: she replied unto him, bring hither to me a man of thy Country whom thou trustest, and cause faire chests to be made, and fill them all with stones, and by thy fellowes thou shalt cause them to be borne into his house, and to him they shall

say,

say that a merchant of Spaine sent them vnto him for to kæpe surely: and when the chests shall be within his house, thou shalt go againe and demand of him thy siluer. Which thing he did, and as the said chests were borne into his house, the Spaniards went with them that bare them, and said to the old man in this manner, My friend, these foure chests be all full of gold, siluer, and precious stones, which we bring to you, as to the trustiest and faithfullest man that we know, for to kæpe them surely, because that we feare the thæues that bee in the desart. After the which words said, came he which the old woman had counselled, and demanded of the old man his siluer. And because that the old man feared that the Spaniard would haue dispraised him, he said, Thou art welcome, I maruell why thou tarriedst so long ere thou camest, and incontinent he restored to him his siluer: and thus by the counsell of the old woman which he greatly thanked, he had his goods againe, and returned into his owne countrey.

The iij. Fable speaketh of the subtill inuention of a sentence, giuen vpon a darke and obscure cause.

OF a time it befell, that a good man a Labourer died, leauing nothing to his son, but only a house, the which son liued by the labour of his hands very poorely. This young man had a rich neighbour, which demanded of him if he would sell his house. But hee said no, because it was come to him be inheritance. Wherefore the said rich man his neighbour con-

uerted oft with him to deceiue him: but the young man fled his companie as much as he might. And the rich man perceiuing that the young man fled his company, he bethought him of a great deceit, and requested of the poore young man, that he would let to him part of his house to delue and make a Celler, which he would hold of him for yerely rent: and the poore man let it him. And when the Celler was made, the rich man brought into it ten tuns of oyle, of the which fiue were full of oyle, and the other fiue were but halfe full: and he made a great pit in the earth, and put the fiue tuns that were halfe full in it, and the other, fiue vpon them; and shut the doore of the Celler, and deliuered vp the key to the poore young man, and requested him (fraudulently) to keepe well his oyle: but the poore young man knew not the malice and falshod of his neighbour, wherefore he was content to keepe the key. And within a while after, as the oyle became deare, the rich man came to the poore man, and asked of him his goods, and the young man gaue him the key. This rich man sold to the merchants his oyle, and warranted each tun full. And when the merchants measured the oyle, they found but fiue of the ten tuns full, whereof the rich man demanded of the poore young man restitution. And for to haue his house, he made him come before the Iudge. And so when the poore man was come before the Iudge, he demanded time and space for to answer, for he thought that he had kept well and truly the oyle: and the Iudge granted him a day. And then went he to a Philosopher which was Procurator for the poore people, and prayed him for charitie that hee would

giue

giue to him good counsell at his need. And he re hear sed and told vnto him all his case, and swore vpon the holy Euangelist that hee tooke none of the rich mans oyle And then the Philosopher answered to him in this manner, My son haue no feare, for the truth may not faile: and the next morrow after the Philosopher went with the poore man before the Iudgement seat, and the same Philosopher was constituted by the King for to giue the iust sentence of it. And after that the cause had beene well defended, and pleaded of both parties, the Philosopher said, This same rich man is of good renowne, and I suppose not that he demanded more than hee should haue. Also I beleeue not that this poore man is guiltie of the blame which he putteth vpon him: but notwithstanding, for to know the truth of it, I ordaine and giue this sentence, that the oyle pure and cleane of the fiue tuns which are full bee measured, and also the Lees thereof, and after that the pure and cleane oyle of the five tuns which bee but halfe full, bee also measured, with the Lees thereof, and then looke if the Lees of the fiue tuns but halfe full, bee equall to the Lees of the other five tuns which were wholly full; and if it be so by measuring truly, that lesse bee found within these vessels which be but halfe full, than in the other, it shall be thereby sufficiently proued, that no oyle hath beene taken out of them: but if there be found as much Lees in the one as in the other, the poore man shall be condemned. And of this sentence the poore young man was well content, and by measuring as aforesaid the troth was knowne: wherefore the poore man was

quit, and the rich man was condemned and his great malice and falshood knowne, for there is no sin or misdeed done, but that once it shall be manifested.

Fable iv. of the sentence giuen vpon the money which was found.

A Rich man sometime went by a City, and as he walked from one side to another, a great purse fell from him wherein were a thousand crownes, the which a poore man found, and toke them to his wife to keepe, whereof she was full glad, and said: thanked be God for all his goodnesse which he sendeth to vs, if her sene now the great summe, keepe it well. And vpon the morrow after, the rich man made to be cryed thorow the Citie, that whosoeuer had found a thousand crownes in a purse, he should restore them to him againe, and that he should haue for his reward a hundred of them. And when this poore man heard the cry, he came incontinent to his wife, and said to her, My wife, that which we haue found must be restored againe, for it is farre better to haue a hundred crownes without sin, than a thousand wrongfully: and though that the woman would haue resisted, yet in the end she was content. And thus the poore man restored the thousand crownes to the rich man, and demanded of him his hundred crownes: But the rich man full of falshood said to the poore man, thou rendrest not to me my gold which thou didst find, for of it I lacke foure hundred peeces of gold, and when thou shalt bring me againe the same foure hundred peeces of gold, then shalt haue of me the hundred crownes which I promised thee. The poore man answered, I haue brought thee all that I haue found,

found, wherefore they fell into great strife, insomuch that the cause was brought before the King to bee decided. Wherefore the King called before him a great Philosopher, which was Procurator for the people. And when the cause was well disputed, the Philosopher moued with pitty, called the poore man and said vnto him, Come hither my friend, By thy faith hast thou restored all the money which thou foundest in the purse? And the poore man answered, yea sir by my faith. Then the Philosopher said before the assistance: Sith this rich man is true and faithfull, and that it is not to be thought that he would demand more than he ought to haue: and on the other part men must beleue that this poore man is knowne for an honest and true man: therefore this is my sentence, That thou sir King take the thousand crownes, & that thou giue a hundred of them to this poore man which found them, and after, when he that hath lost them shall come, thou shalt restore them to him: and if it happen that another find the thousand foure hundred crownes, they shall be rendred againe vnto this good man which is here present, which saith that he hath lost them. The which sentence was agreable & pleasing to all the company. And when the rich man saw that he was deceiued by his owne folly, he desired mercy and grace of the King, saying: Sir, this poore man that hath found my purse, hath truly restored to me all that I ought to haue, but certainly I would haue deceiued him; wherefore I pray the that thou wilt take pitie on me. And then the King had mercy on him, and the poore man was well contented & paid, and all the malice of the rich man was knowne.

The

The fifth Fable is of the faith of three fellowes.

OFt it hapneth, that the euill which is procured to other, commeth vnto him which procureth it, as it appeareth by three fellowes, of the which twaine were Burgesses, and the third a Labourer the which being assumed together for to goe to the holy Sepulcher, these three fellowes made great prouision of floure for their pilgrimage, in such wise that it was all consumed, except only for to make one loafe. And when the Burgesses saw the end of their floure, they said, If we find not some meanes for to beguile this villaine, because that he is a right great eater, wee shall surely die for hunger: wherefore we must deuise a way that wee may haue the Loafe, which shall bee made of all our floure. And therefore they concluded together, and said, When the Loafe shall be put into the ouen, we shall goe and lay vs downe to sleepe, and he that shall dreame best, the loafe shall be his. And because that we both be subtill and wise, he shall not dreame so well as we shall, wherefore the loafe shall be ours: whereof all three were well content, and all began to sleepe. But when the labourer perceiued all their deceit, and saw that his fellowes were a sleepe, he went and drew the loafe out of the ouen, & ate it, & after he fained himselfe to be asleepe: & then one of the Burges rose vp, and said to his fellowes, I haue dreamed a wonderfull dreame, for two Angels haue taken & borne me with great ioy before the diuine Maiestie. And the other Burgelle awoke, and said, thy dreame

is

is wonderfull, but I suppose that mine is farre fairer than thine is: for I dreamed that two Angels drew me on hard ground, for to lead me into hell. And after they did awake the villaine, which as dreadfull said, who is here? and they answered, We be thy fellows. And he said to them, how be ye so soone returned? and they said, we departed not yet from hence. And hee said to them, by my faith I dreamed that the Angels had led one of you into heaven, and the other into hell. Wherefore I supposed that you should never haue come againe, and therefore I arose vp from sleepe, & because I was an hungry, I drew the loafe out of the ouen and ate it. Thus o't it hapneth, that he which supposeth to beguile another, is beguiled himselfe.

The xj. Fable is of the Labourer and and Nightingale.

THere was sometime a Labourer which had a garden that was very pleasant, into the which he oft went for his disport and pleasure, and one day at euen, when he was wearie, and had trauailed sore, for to take his recreation, he entred into his garden, and set himselfe downe vnder a tree, where he heard the song of the Nightingale. And for the great pleasure and ioy which he tooke thereof, he sought, and at the last found the meanes to take the Nightingale, to the end that her might haue greater ioy and pleasure of her afterward. And when she was taken, she demanded of the Labourer, Wherefore hast thou taken so great paine to take me? for well thou wottest thou mayst haue no great profit by me. And the

Labourer

Labourer answered thus to the Nightingale, for to heare thée sing I haue taken thée, and the Nightingale answered, Certainly, in vaine thou hast laboured, for no good will I sing while I am in prison. Then the Labourer answered, if thou singest not well, I shall eat thée. And then the Nightingale said, If thou put mée within a pot for to be sodden, little meat shalt thou haue of my bodie: and if thou settest me to be rosted, there shall be lesse, and therefore boyled nor rosted thou shalt not fill thy belly of me; but if thou let me flie I shall doe thée great good: for thée things I shall teach thée, which thou shalt loue better than thée fat Kine. Then the Labourer let the Nightingale flie. And when shee was out of his hands and that shee was vpon a tree, shee said to the Labourer, My friend, I haue promised thee that I shall teach thee three things, whereof the first is this, that thou beleeue nothing which is impossible: the second is, that thou keepe well that is thine: and the third is, that thou take no sorrow for the thing lost, which may not be recouered. And soone after the Nightingale began to sing, and in her song said thus: Blessed bee God which hath deliuered mee out of the hands of this villaine or churle, which hath not knowne, seene nor touched the precious Diamond which I haue within my bellie: for if he had found it he had beene right rich, and from his hands I had not escaped. And the Labourer which heard her song, began to complaine and to make great sorrow, and after said, I am vnhappie that I haue lost so faire a treasure. And the Nightingale said to the Labourer. Now know I well that thou art a foole, for thou

takest

takeſt griefe for that which thou ſhouldeſt haue none: and ſoone thou haſt forgotten my doctrine, becauſe thou ſuppoſeſt that in my belly there ſhould be a precious ſtone, more beautie than I am, and I told and haue taught to thée, thou ſhouldeſt neuer beléeue that thing which is vnpoſſible: and if that ſtone were thine, why haſt thou loſt it? & if thou haſt loſt it, and canſt not recouer it, why takeſt thou ſorrow for it? Therefore it is vaine to chaſtiſe or teach a fools, that will neuer beléeue the doctrine and inſtruction that is taught him.

Fable vij. of the Rhetorician and the crooke-backed.

A Philoſopher ſaid once vnto his ſon, that when he were fallen by chance into ſome damnage or perill, as ſoone as hée might hée ſhould deliuer him out of it, to the end that afterward he ſhould bée no more vered therewith, as it appeareth by this fable. Of a certaine Rhetorician, which once demanded of a King, that all of them which ſhould enter into the City, hauing ſome kind of fault in their bodies, as crooked or counterfeited, he might haue of them at the entry of the gate a penny. The which requeſt the King granted, and made his letters to be ſealed, and written vnder his Signet. And he kept them ſtill at the gate, and of euery one that was lame, ſcabbed, or had any deformity on their bodies, he toke a penny. It hapned on a day, that among the reſt a crookbacked and deformed man would haue entred within the City, without giuing any penny, and did put vpon his backe a faire Mantle, and afterward came to the gate. And when the Porter beheld him, hée perceiued

perceiued that hee was goggle eyed, and ſaid vnto him: Pay me my due. And the goggle eyed would pay him nothing, wherefore hee toke from him his mantle: and when he ſaw that he was crookebacked, he ſaid vnto him, Thou wouldeſt not before pay me a penny but now thou ſhalt pay me twaine. And as they ſtriued together, his hat fell off of his head, & the Porter which ſaw his ſcabbed head, ſaid vnto him, Now ſhalt thou pay three pence vnto me. And then the Porter yet againe ſet his hands vpon him, and felt that his body was all ſcabbed. And as they were thus wreſtling together, the crookebacked fell to the ground, and hurt himſelfe ſore vpon the legges. And then the Porter ſaid vnto him, thou ſhalt pay me fiue pence, for thy body is all counterfeited. Wherefore thou ſhalt leaue here thy mantle: and if thou hadſt paide a penny at the firſt, thou hadſt gone on thy way free and quiet, without any further moleſtation. Therefore he is wiſe that payeth that he oweth, to the end that thereof come not to him greater damage.

The ſeuenth Fable maketh mention of a Diſciple and a ſheepe.

THere was ſometime a Diſciple which toke his pleaſure to rehearſe and tell many Fables. The Diſciple prayed his maſter to tell him a long fable: the Maſter anſwered, Beware it happen not vnto vs as it appeareth by this preſent Fable, of a King and of his Fabulator. And the Diſciple ſaid to his Maſter, I pray thee tell me how it befell. And the Maſter ſaid vnto his diſciple, There was ſometime a King that had a fabulator, which rehearſed vnto him

him oft times when he would slepe, fiue Fables, to reioyce or make the King merry, and to make him fall aslepe. But it hapned on a day, that the King being heauy and sad, could in no wise fall aslepe. And after the said Fabulator had rehearsed his fiue Fables, the King desired to heare more. And then the said Fabulator rehearsed vnto him three short Fables. And then the King said vnto him that he would heare one more longer, and then shall I slepe. And the Fabulator then rehearsed vn o him such a Fable as here shall be shewed, of a rich man that went to market or faire to buy Sheepe, and which man bought a thousand Sheepe. And as he was returning from the faire, he came to a Riuer; and because of the great water he could not passe ouer the bridge: neuertheless, he went so long to and fro on the riuage of the said Riuer, that at last he found a narrow way, vpon the which might passe scant three sheepe at once; and thus he passed and had them ouer one after another. And hitherto rehearsed of this fable, the Fabulator fell aslepe: and anone after the King awoke the Fabulator, and said to him thus: I pray thee that thou wilt make an end of the Fable which thou hast begunne to tell me, and the Fabulator answered him in this manner: Sir, the Riuer is great, & the sheep are little; Wherefore let the Merchant driue ouer his sheepe, and after I shall make an end of my Fable. And then was the King pacified. And therefore be thou content with that I haue rehearsed vnto thee, for there be people so curious in speech, that they cannot be contented with few words

The

Fable ninth, of the Wolfe, the Fox, and the Cheese.

There was sometime a Labourer, which could not rule his Oxen, because they smote with their feet: wherefore the Labourer said to them, I pray God the Wolfe may deuoure you vp all. These words when the Wolfe had heard, he hid himselfe nere there about, and then came to eat them. And when night was come, the Labourer vnbound his Oxen, and let them goe into his house. And when the Wolfe saw the Labourer comming towards him, he said, O thou Labourer, many times in the day thou didst giue me thy Oxen, and therefore keepe thy promise. Then the Labourer said to the Wolfe, I promised thee nought at all. And the Wolfe said, I shall not let thee passe vntill thou performe thy promise. And as they thus stroue and contended both together, thy committed the cause to be pleaded before a Iudge: and as they went to seeke a Iudge, they met a Fox, to whom they declared the cause of their strife. Then said the Fox vnto them, I shall giue on your cause a good sentence; but I must speake with each of you apart, and they were content; and the Fox said vnto the Labourer, Thou shalt giue me a good fat hen, and another to my wife, and I shall make it so, that thou and all thine Oxen shall go freely to thine house. Herewith the Labourer was well content, and after the Fox said to the Wolfe, I haue well laboured for thee, for the Labourer shall giue vnto thee a great Cheese, and let him goe home with his Oxen, and the Wolfe was well content. And after the Fox said vnto the Wolfe; Come thou with me,

and

and I shall leade thee where the cheese is: and then he led him to and fro here and there, untill such time that the moone did shine full brightly, and when they came to a Well, the Fox leapt upon it, and shewed vnto the Wolfe the shadow of the Moone, which reluced in the Well, and said to him, Looke now gossip how that cheese is faire, great and broad: haste thee therfore and go downe, and take the faire cheese. Then the Wolfe said to the Fox, Thou must be the first of both that shall goe downe, and if thou maiest, not bring it up with thee, because of the greatnesse I then shall come to helpe thee; and the Fox was content because there was a couple of buckets, of the which one went downe and the other came up and the Fox entred into one of the buckets and descended into the Well, and being downe, he called vnto the Wolfe, saying: Gossip come hither and helpe, for the Cheese is so bigge that I cannot beare it. Then the Wolfe being afraid that the Fox would eat the Cheese, entred hastily into the other bucket, and as fast as the Wolfe went downe, the Fox came up: and when the Wolfe perceiued the Fox comming, he said vnto him: My Gossip, ye goe hence: Thou saist true, said the Fox, for thus it is with the world, as one commeth downe, the other goeth up. Thus the fox through his subtilty departed, and left the wolfe in the Well: so lost the Wolfe both the Oxen and the Cheese. It is not good therefore to leaue that which is certaine, for that which is vncertaine: for many be in like sort deceiued by the falshood and deceit of Aduocates and Iudges.

The tenth Fable is of the husband, the mother, and the wife.

There was a merchant that married a young woman which had her mother yet aliue. It hapened that this merchant went once into a far Countrey for to buy some ware: and as he was going, he tok his wife vnto his mother, to kep and rule her honestly till he came againe. His wife then by the consent of her mother, enamoured her selfe on a faire young man, which gaue her mony to buy good cheere. And as they there made merry the husband came again from the faire, and knockt at the dooze, whereat they were abashed. Then said the Mother vnto them, Feare not, but doe as I shall tell you, and care not: then said she to the young man, take this sword and goe to the gate, and beware you say no word to him, but let me alone: and as the husband would haue entred into the house, seing the young man holding a naked sword, he was greatly affraid: and then the mother said to him; My sonne, thou art welcome, be not afraid of this man, for there ran after him for to haue slaine him, and by chance he found the doze open, and this is the cause why he came hither to saue his life. Then the husband said to them, We haue done well, and I con you great thanke. Thus went the young man his way safely by the subtilty of the mother and the daughter: to the which trust not thy selfe, if thou be wise.

Fable xi. of an harlot or bawde.

There was sometime a Gentleman which had a chast wife, and wonderfull faire, this gentleman would haue gone on pilgrimage to Rome, and left

left his wife at home, because that he knew her for a good and chaste woman: It hapned on a day as she went into the towne, that a faire young man was enamoured on her, and tooke on him hardinesse, and required her of loue, and promised her very many faire gifts. But she was good, and had rather die, than consent thereto: wherefore the yong man almost died for sorrow, to the which fellow came an old woman that demaunded of him the cause of his sickenesse. And the young man discouered vnto her all the matter, asking helpe and counsell of her. And the old woman being wily and malicious, said vnto him: Be of good courage, and feare not, for I shall so bring about this feat, that thou shalt haue thy will fulfilled. And after this, the old baude went home vnto her owne house, and made a Cat which she had at home to fast three daies one after another, & after that she toke some bread, with a great quantity of mustard vpon it, and gaue the same vnto her Cat for to eat. And when the Cat smelled it, she began for to weepe and cry. And the old woman, went vnto the house of the young woman, and bare her little Cat with her, the which good and young woman, receiued and welcommed her very honestly, because that all the towne held her for a godly woman: and as they were talking together, the young woman had pitty of the Cat which wept, and demanded of the old woman what the Cat ayled. And the old woman said to her, Ha my faire daughter, reuue not my sorrow: and saying these words, she began to weepe, and said, My friend, for no good will I tell thee the cause why my cat weepeth; and the young woman said, My good mother:

I pray you that you will tell me the cause wherefore your Cat weepeth. And the old woman said to her, My friend, I will, if thou wilt sweare that thou shalt neuer rehearse it to any body. To the which promise the good and true young Woman accorded her selfe, supposing that it had bene all good, and said, I will. And then the old Woman said to her in this maner, My friend, the same Cat which thou seest yander, was my daughter, which was wonderfull faire, gracious and chaste, which a young man loued much, and because shee refused him, he died for loue; wherefore the gods hauing pitty on him, haue turned my daughter to this Cat. And the young woman, supposing that her old mother had said truth, said to her in this manner. Alas my faire mother, I wot not what I shall doe, for such a case may well happen to me. For in this towne is a young man which almost dyed for the loue of me. But for the loue of my Husband, to whom I ought to keepe my selfe chaste, I haue not granted to him, neuertheless, I shall doe that that thou shalt counsell me. And the old woman said to her, My friend, haue pitty on him so soone as thou maiest, lest it befall to thee as it did to my daughter. The young woman then answered to her, and said, If he require me any more, I shall accord with him, and if hee require me no more, yet will I proferre my selfe to him and to the end I offend not the gods, I shall accomplish it as soone as I may. The old woman then tooke leaue of her, and went to the young man, and rehearsed to him all these tydings, whereof his heart was ioyfull, and anon he went to the young woman, and with her fulfilled his desire. Thus we

may

may ſée, what euils may be done by bawdes, wherefore I would to God they were all burnt.

The xii. Fable is of a blind man and his Wife.

THere was ſometime a blinde man which had a faire wife, of whom he was iealous, wherefore he kept her ſo that ſhe might goe no where, for euer he held her by the hand. In the end, ſhe was enamoured of a young youth, but they could not finde the meanes to fulfill their will: not withſtanding the Woman which was ſubtile and ingenious, counſelled her friend that he ſhould come to her houſe, and that he ſhould enter into the garden and clime vp into a tree: hee did as ſhee bad him, and hauing made their enterpriſe, the Woman came againe into her houſe and ſaid vnto her husband, My friend, I beſeech you that you will goe into the garden for to diſport vs a while there. And the blind man was content, and ſaid to his wife, Well my friend, I am content, let vs goe thither: and as they were vnder the Peare tree, ſhe ſaid to her Husband, My friend, I pray thée let me goe vp into the tree, and I will gather for vs both ſome faire Peares. Well my friend ſaid the blind man, doe ſo: and when ſhe was vpon the tree, ſhée began to ſhake the Peare tree at one ſide, and the young man at the other ſide: and when the blind man heard the Peare tree ſhake thus hard, and the noiſe they made, he ſaid, Ah ill woman, albeit I ſée thée not, Neuertheleſſe I féele and vnderſtand thée: but I heartily beſeech the gods to ſend me my ſight againe: and as ſoone as he had made his pray-

er, Iupiter restored to him his sight. When he saw that pageant vpon the tree, he said to her, Ah vnhappy Woman, I shall neuer haue ioy with thee. And for that the young woman was ready in speech, and very subtill withall, she replyed presently in this maner, My Friend, thou art beholding to me for thy sight, for I neuer ceased day nor night to pray vnto the gods, that they would render vnto thee thy sight, Wherefore the goddesse Venus visibly shewed herselfe to me, and said, That if I would doe some pleasure to this said young man she would restore to thee thy sight: and thus am I the cause of it. Then the good man said to her, My right deare wife and good friend, I cry thee mercy, and thanke thee greatly, for thou hast done right to me, and I great wrong to thee.

Fable xiii. of the Taylor, the steward, and his seruants

MAn ought not to doe vnto others, that which he would not haue done vnto himselfe, as it appeareth by this present fable, of a steward which had a Taylor, which was a good workeman, as any was in those dayes, which Taylor had many seruants. whereof one was called Medius, that surmounted all the other in shaping or sowing; wherefore the Steward commanded his seruants, that the sayd taylor should allwaies fare well when they were at his house, and eat and drinke of the best. It hapned on a day that the Steward gaue vnto them very delicious meat, in which was some hony, and because that Medius was not there, the Steward said vnto the rest, that they should kepe some of that

meat

meate for him. Then the maister taylor answered, he must haue none, for if he were here, he would not eat of it, for he did neuer loue honey. And as they had done, Medius came, and demanded of his fellowes, Why kept ye no part of this meat for mee? Then the Steward answered, Because that thy maister said, Thou neuer didst eat any honey, and therefore no part of the meat was kept for thee. And Medius answered neuer a word, but beganne to thinke how hee might quit his maister. Upon a day as Medius was alone, the Steward demanded of him, if he knew no man that could worke so well as his maister? And Medius said nay, and that it was great pittie of a sickneſſe that he had. Then the Steward demanded what sickneſſe it was? and Medius answered, My Lord, when he is entred into his frenzie or woodneſſe, there commeth vpon him a rage. And how shall I know it, said the Steward? Certainly, my Lord, said Medius, When ye shall see that he shall sit at his worke, and that he shall looke here and there, and shall smite vpon the bord with his fist, then may ye know that his sickneſſe commeth vpon him. And then, without ye take him and binde him, and also beat him well, he shall doe great harme and damage. And the Steward said to him, Care not therefore, my friend, for well I shall beware of him. And the next morning the Steward came to see the Taylors. And then Medius, which knew well the cauſe of his comming, tooke away secretly his maisters shares, and hid them, and anon his maister began to looke for them, & searched all about here and there, and smote with his fist vpon the bord. And then the

Maſter Steward began to looke on his manners, and ſuddainely made him to be taken and holden by his ſeruants, and after made him to be bound and well beaten. Then was the Maſter Taylor all abaſhed and demanded of him, My Lord, Wherefore doe you beate me ſo cruelly? What offence haue I done, that I muſt be bound and thus beaten? And then the Steward ſaid to him in this manner, becauſe Medius told me that thou art franticke, and if thou be not well bound and beaten, thou wouldeſt doe great harme. And the Maſter came to his ſeruant Medius, and rigorouſly ſaid vnto him, Ha thou bad boy, full of euill words, when ſaweſt thou me mad? And his ſeruant prouidly anſwered him, My maſter, When diddeſt thou ſee that I eat no honey? Therefore I threw to thee one bone for another, And the maſter Steward and all his ſeruants began to laugh, and ſaid he had well done. Wherefore men ought not to doe vnto other, other wiſe than they would ſhould be done vnto themſelues.

Here followeth the fables of Poge the Florentine.

The firſt Fable, is of the ſubtilte of a woman for to deceiue her husband.

THE falſhood of women is marueilous, as it appeareth by this fable. Of a merchant that was newly wedded vnto a faire young woman, which Merchant went ouer the ſea to buy and ſell, and for to get maintenance whereby to liue honeſtly: and becauſe that he ſtayed very long,

his

his wife supposed that he was dead, and therefore she enamoured her selfe of another man that did ble her company, and did her much good: for he caused her house to be new built, which had need of great reparation, and much goods also he brought into the same. And a long time after the departing of the said merchant, he came againe to his house, which he saw builded, and saw diuers dishes, potes pannes, and such other houshold stuffe, wherefore he asked of his wife, how she had found the meane to haue repaird so soundly his house? And she answered that it was by the grace of God. And hee said, Blessed be God for it. And when he was within the Chamber he saw the bedde very richly couered, and the walls well hanged, and demanded of his wife as he had done before, and she answered as before. For which he thanked God as he had done before. And as he was set at dinner, there was brought before him unto his wife, a child of three yeeres of age, or thereabout, whereof he demanded of his wife to whom this young child belonged: and she said, God of his goodnesse hath sent it me. Then said the merchant to his wife in this manner, I render no thankes to God for this, for he hath taken too much paine upon my worke, & I will not that in any wise he meddle any more therwith, for such things belong only to me, and not to him.

The second Fable is of the woman and the hypocrite.

The generation or birth of the hypocrite is damnable and euill. As it appeareth by this fable, which

which Poge rehearseth vnto vs, which saith: that sometime he found in himselfe in a good fellowship, where he heard a fable rehearsed, the tenor whereof followeth, & the said Poge said, That of all the goods of the world the hipocrites be possessors. For howbeit that an hipocrite hath sometime a will to helpe a poore man, yet he hath this comodity in him, that he had rather see a man lie at point of death, than saue his life with halfe a penny; and his presumption is called hypocrisie, as ye shall heare by the fable following, the which saith: that sometime the custome of all the poore was, that they went before folkes doores without saying any word. It hapned at that time that a poore man, honest and of good life, went to get his liuing from one doore to another: and vpon a day among other, he went and set himselfe vpon a great stone before the doore of a Widdow, which widdow was accustomed euer to giue somewhat. And when the good woman knew that he was at the doore, she brought him his portion as she was accustomed, and as she gaue to him the meat, she looked on him, and seeing him so faire and well made of body, she then filled with carnall concupiscence, and burning in the fire of lone, required & instantly prayed him, that he would returne thither within three dayes, and promised to him that she would giue him a right good diner: and the poore man said vnto her that he would: And when he came againe, he set himselfe before the doore of the Widdowes house, and the woman well knew when he should come, wherfore she went to the gate and said, Come in, good man, for we shall dine together: whereto the poore

man

man assented, and entred into the house, and the widdow gaue to him good meat and good drinke. And when they had well dined, the said widdow praised the good man greatly, and after she kissed him, requiring him that shee might haue the copy of his loue: and then the poore man all ashamed, knowing her thought and will, answered thus to her: Certainely my good mistresse I dare not, but neuertheless, I would faine doe it. And the Widdow all inflamed with loue, prayed him more and more. And when the poore man saw that he might not excuse himselfe, hee said to the widdow in this manner: My friend, sith thou desirest me to doe so great an euill, I take God to my witnesse that thou art causer of it: for I am non consenting to the deed: but saying these words, he yelded to her will.

Fable iii. of the young woman which accused her husband of defect.

POge the Florentine saith, that sometime there was a man named Nerus Depacis which of his age was among the Florentines right sage and wise. This Nerus had a faire daughter the which hee maried to a faire young man & a rich, & of a good parentage: the which young man the next day after the feast of the wedding, did leade her into his Castle, a little way without the city of Florence. And within few dayes after, this young man brought his wife againe to Florence, vnto the house of her father Nerus: who made them a feast, as it was accustomed to doe all that time, in some place, eight daies after the wedding. When the new married woman was come againe to her fathers house, she made not ouer good cheere,

chere, but euer she looked downeward to the earth, all sad and melancholious. And when her mother saw her daughter so sorrowfull, and of mourning countenance, she called her into a Chamber, whereas no body was but they two, and asked of her the cause of her sorrow, saying; How fare ye my daughter? What want ye, haue ye not all things comming to you after your desire? Wherefore take ye such heauinesse? Then the Daughter weeping said vnto her Mother, Alas, my mother, Ye haue not married me to a man, for of such a thing as a man ought to haue, he hath neuer a deale, sauing a litle part of the thing for which wedding is made. And then the Mother right sorrowfull and wroth of this euill fortune, went to her husband Nerus, and told him of the euill hap of her daughter, whereof he was greatly wroth and sore troubled. And some after this fortune was told among all the linage of Nerus, whereof they were all sorrowfull to heare that so faire and comely a young man, endued with so many good gifts and graces, besides riches and renowne, was faulty of the thing for which marriage is made. Neuertheless the tables were set and couered, and when time of dinner came, the young man came into the house of Nerus, with divers of his friends and his parents, and incontinent they set them all downe at the table, some with heauy and sorrowfull hearts, some with merry mindes and ioyfull countenances. And when the young man saw, that his friends made good chere, and that all the friends of his wife were heauy and sad, he prayed and besought them, that they would tell him the cause of their heauinesse and sorrow, but

none

none of them all would answer him. Neuertheleſſe, he beſought them againe; and then one of them full of ſorrow, and more forward in ſpæch than any of the reſt, ſaid, Certainely my faire ſonne, thy Wife hath told vs that thou art no perfect man. At theſe words the yong man began to laugh. And ſaid with an high voyce, that all that were there might underſtand him, My Parents and my friends, make good cheere, for the cauſe of your ſorrow ſhall ſone be appeaſed: and then he being cloathed with a ſhort gowne, untyed his hoſen, & took his member out with his hand, which was great and very ſufficient, and laid the ſame vpon the table, ſo that all the company there preſent might ſée it. Wherefore all the fellowſhip were very ioyfull and glad, many of the men wiſhing themſelues the like, and diuers of the women deſiring that their husbands had ſuch an inſtrument. And then ſome of the friends and Parents of Nerus daughter, went to her and ſaid, that ſhe had done great wrong to complaine of her Husband, for hee had wherewith ſhe might be well contented, and blamed her great folly. To whom ſhe anſwered in this manner, ſaying, My friends, why blame you me? I complaine not without a cauſe: For our Aſſe which is a brute Beaſt, hath a member as great as mine arme, and my husband which is a man, his member is ſcarce halfe ſo great: wherefore the ſimple and young damſell wéend, that men ſhould haue their members as great or greater than Aſſes, Therefore it is oft ſaid, that much lacketh he of that a foole thinketh or wœneth.

The fourth Fable of hunting and hawking.

POge a Florentin rehearseth to vs, how once he was in fellowshippe where men spake of the superfine cure of them which gouerne the doggs and Hawks: Whereof a Millanois named Paulus began to laugh, and required of Poge that he would rehearse some fable of the said Hawkes, and for loue of the fellowshyp he said in this manner. Sometime there was a Physicion which was a Millanois. This Physicion healed fooles of all manner of folly, and in what manner he healed them I shall tell you. This Leech had within his house a great garden, and in the midst of it was a great and deepe pit, which was full of stinking water, and within the said pit the Physicion put the fooles after the quantity of their foolishnesse, some vnto the knee, and other vnto the bellie. And there he bound them to a post, but none he put deeper than vnto the stomacke, for doubt of farther inconuenience. It hapned then that among other, one was brought to him, which he put into the said water vp to the thighes. When he had borne the space of fifteene dayes within the said water, he began to be peaceable and had his wit againe. And that he might take some disport and consolation, he required his keeper that hee might walke about the Garden, promising not to depart thereout. The keeper that kept him, vnbound him from the stake, and had him out of the water. And when he had borne many dayes out of the pit, he went neere vnto the gate of the Garden, but durst not goe out, lest he should bee put againe within the said pit. Vpon a time he went

vnto

vnto the gate, and as he looked all about he saw a faire young man on horseback, that bare a Sparhawke on his fist, and had with him a couple of faire Spaniels; whereat the foole was all abashed, and because of noueltie, he called the said young man, saying My friend, I pray thee thou wilt tell me what that is thou art set vpon? And the young man said, It is a horse, which doth profit me to chase and beare mee where I please. Then he asked of him What is that thou beares on thy fist, and whereto is it good? and the young man answered him, It is a Sparhawke which is good to take Partriches and Quailes. Yet againe did the foole demand of him, My friend, what are those that doe follow thee, and wherefore are they good? Then the young man answered him they be Dogs, and are good to search and find Partriches and quailes: and when they haue raised them, my Sparhawke takes them, whereof procéedeth vnto me great ioy and pleasure. And the foole demanded againe: What profit shall all that they take in the whole yéere bring thee? And the young man said vnto him, Foure or fiue crownes, or thereabouts. What no more said the foole? And how much shall they dispend thee in a yéere? And the young man answered Forty or fifty crownes. And when the foole heard these words, he said againe to the young man, O my friend, I pray thee that soone thou wilt depart from hence, for if our Physitian come he shall put thée into the same pit because thou art a foole: I was put in it up to the thighes, but he will surely put thee therein vp to the chinne: for thou dost commit the greatest folly that euer I heard spoken of.

And

And therefore the story of hunting and hawking is a slothfull cure, and none ought to doe it without hee were very rich, and a man of liuelyhood, and yet it ought not to be done often, but sometime for to take disport, and to driue away melancholy.

The v. Fable is of the recitation of some monsters.

POge, of Florence reciteth how in his time one named Hugh, Prince of the Medices, saw a Cat that had two heads, and his legges before and behind were double, as they had beene ioyned together. Also about the marches of Italy, within a meddow was sometime a Cow, which brought forth a Serpent of marueilous greatnesse, right hideous and fearefull: for first, he had the head greater than the head of a calfe. Secondly, he had a necke of the length of an Asse, and his body made after the likenesse of a Dogge, and his taile was wondrous thicke and long without comparison. And when the Cow saw that shee had made such a birth, and that within her belly shee had borne so horrible a beast, she was very fearefull, and lifted her selfe vp, and supposed to haue fled away; but the Serpent with his long taile enlaced her two hinder legges, and then the Serpent began to suck the Cow, and sucked so long till that he found some milke. And as soone as the Cow could escape from him, she fled vnto the other kine, but incontinent her paps, and her hinder legs, and all that the Serpent touched, was all blacke a great time after. And soone after, the said Cow made a faire Calfe the which maruaile was auouched to the said Poge, he being at Ferrara. And yet againe soone after that there

there was found in a riuer a monster mariner of the Sea, of the forme or likenesse as followeth. First, he had from the nauell vpward the likenesse of a man, & from the nauell downeward like the forme or making of a fish, the which part was gemine, that is to say, double. Secondly, he had a great head, and he had great hornes about his eares. Also he had great paps, and a wonderfull great and horrible mouth, and his hands reached into his intrailes or bowels, and at both his elbowes he had wings right broad and great of fishes mailes, wherewith he swimmed, and onely he had but the head out of the water. It happened then, that as many women washed clothes at the said riuer, that this horrible and dreadfull Beast for default of meat came swimming toward the said women: Of the which he tooke one by the hand, and supposed to haue drawne her into the water, but she was strong and well aduised, & resisted the said monster, and as she defended her selfe, she began to cry with a high voice, Helpe, helpe, whereupon fiue women ranne vnto her, and by hurling of stones they slew the said monster. Also Poge saith, that being at Ferrara, he saw the said Monster, and said, that diuers young children were accustomed for to walk and bathe themselues in the said riuer, but they came not all home againe, wherefore the women washed their clothes no more at the said Port: for the folke supposed that the Monster killed and deuoured the young children which were drowned. Also, within a little while after it befell out about the marches of Italy, that there was a child borne which had two heads, and two visages, beholding one another,

and the armes of each other imbraced the body, the which body from the nauill vpward was toyned, saue the two heads and from the nauill downeward, the lims were all separated one from another, in such wise, that the lims of generation were shewed manifestly. Of the which childe, tydings came vnto the person of Poge at Rome.

Fable vi. of the Parson the Dogge, and the Bishop.

Siluer causeth all things to be done, vnto the hallowing againe of a place, which is prophane or interdict. As ye shall heare by this present fable; of a Priest dwelling in the countrie, which sometime had a dogge which he loued well, the which Priest was very rich. This dogge by processe of time died, and when he was dead, he buried him in the churchyard, because of the great loue wherewith he loued him. It hapned so, that the Bishop knew hereof by the aduertisement of some other, wherefore he sent for the said Priest, and supposed to haue of him a great sum of gold, or else he would make him to be seuerely punished. and he wrote a letter to the said Priest, of which the tenor contained onely, that he should come and speake with him. And when the priest had read the letter, he vnderstood well all the cause, and thought in himselfe that he would haue of him some siluer, for he knew well enough the condition of the Bishop: and forthwith he toke his breuiar and a hundred crownes with him, and went for to speake with his Prelate, and when he came before him the Pre-

late

late beganne to shew him the enormitie of his misdeede: and the Priest answered, Right reuerend Father, if ye knew the soueraine prouidence wherewith the said dogge was filled, ye would not maruell if hee hath well deserued to be buried honestly and worshipfully among men: hee was all filled with humain wit, as well in his life, as in the article of his death. And then the Bishop said, How may that be? Rehearse to me then the whole manner of his life. Then the Priest said, Certainly right reuerent Father, you ought right well to know, when he was at the article of Death he made his testament, and the dogge knowing your need and indigence, bequeathed you a hundred crownes of gold: the which I bring now vnto you. And the Bishop for loue of the money assayled the priest, and also allowed the same sepulture. And therefore Auser causeth all things to be granted or done.

The vii. Fable. is of the Fox, the Cock, and the Dogges.

ALL the reward of them that mocke other, is to be mocked themselues, as appeareth by this present fable, of a Cocke which sometime saw a fox come toward him sore hungry; which Cocke supposed that he came toward him but to eat some of his hens, for which cause the cocke made all his hens to fly vpon a tree. And the fox began to cry toward the cocke good tydings, good tydings, and after he saluted the cocke right reuerently, and demanded of him thus, O Gossip, what dost thou here so high, and the hennes with thee? hast thou not heard the good

tydings worthy and profitable for us: and then the Cocke full of malice answered to him, Nay verily gossip, but I pray the tell them vnto vs. Then said the For to the Cocke, Certainely gossip, they be the best that euer yee heard, for ye may goe and talke and commune among all beasts without any harme or damage, and they shall doe you both pleasure and all seruice to them possible. For thus it is concluded and also confirmed by the great councell of Beasts, that none bee so hardy, to ver or let in any wise none other, be it neuer so little a beast; for the which good tydings, I pray the that thou wilt come downe, to the end that we may sing Te Deum Laudamus for ioy. But the Cocke knowing well the falsnesse of the For, replied in this manner, Certainely my brother and good friend, thou hast brought vnto me right good tydings, whereof more than a hundred times I thanke the: and saying these words, the Cocke lift vp his necke and lokt farre from him, and the For said, What gossip, whereabout lookest thou? And the Cocke said, Certainely my Brother, I see a couple of Dogges comming hither with open mouth, which as I suppose, come for to bring vs the tydings thou hast told vs. And then the For shoke for feare of the dogges, and said to the Cocke, God be with you my friend, it is time that I depart hence before the dogges come neerer: and saying these words, he ran away as fast as he might; and then the Cocke cryed after him, saying: Gossip, why runnest thou thus? if the peace be accorded, thou oughtest to doubt nothing. Ha gossip said the for, I doubt that these two dogs haue not heard of the de-

cree

cre of the peace. And thus when a beguiler is beguiled, he receiueth the salarie or paiment which he ought to haue, wherefore let euery man keepe himselfe there from.

POgius rehearseth, that there were two women in Rome which he knew, of diuers age and forme: which came to the Curtisan to get somewhat for their bodies; whom he receiued, and it happened, that he knew the fairest of them both twice, and the other once, and so departed. Afterward when they should depart he gaue to them a peece of cloth, not telling how much each of them should haue for their part: and in parting of the said cloth, there fell betweene the women a strife, because one of them demanded two parts, after the exigence of her worke, and the other the halfe, each of them shewing their reasons, the one saying, that she had suffered him twice to doe his pleasure, and the other pretended that she was ready, and in her was no default, and so from brawling they fell to fighting. And their husbands not knowing the cause of their strife, each of them defended his wiues cause; from the fighting of the women, it came to their husbands, with buffets a casting of stones, so long that men ran betweene them, and after the custome of Rome, both the husbands were brought to prison, bearing enmitie each to other, and not knowing wherefore. The said cloth was put into the hands of women secretly, and not parted, but it was secretly argued among the women how it would be parted: and they demanded of Doctors what was the law of it. He saith also that a

Merchant of Florence bought a horse of a man, and made his convent with the seller for xxv. Ducats, for to pay forthwith in hand xv. Ducats, and for the rest he would become his debter, and the seller was content, and thereupon delivered the horse, and received xv. Ducats. And a while after, the seller demanded of the buyer the residue. And he denied the payment, and bad him hold his covenant, for, said the buyer, we accorded that I should be thy debter, and if I should satisfie and pay, I should no more be thy debter.

HEC telleth us also that there was a Carrike of Jene hired into France, for to make warre against the Englishmen, the which Carrike a gentleman of France beheld and saw, and said he would be avenged on him that bare his armes: whereupon arose an alteration, insomuch that the Frenchman provoked the Genoes to battaile: the Genoes accepted the provocation, & came at the day assigned into the field, without any array or habilements of warre, and the Frenchman came well appointed into the field. And then the patron of the Carrike said, Wherefore is it that we two should fight this day and make battaile? Because, said the other, that thine armes bee mine, and belonged to me before thou hadst them. Then the Genoes said, It is no nede to make any battaile therefore, for the armes that I beare, is not the head of an Ore, but it is the head of a cow. which thing so spoken, the noble frenchman was abashed, and so departed halfe mocked.

Also

ALso he saith, that there was a Physition dwelling in a Citie, which was a cunning man in that Science, and had a seruant, a young man, that made pilles, after a certaine forme that he had shewed vnto him: and when this young man had dwelled long with him, and could perfectly make the pilles, he departed from his Master, and went into a strange Countrie where he was not knowne, letting them vnderstand that he was a cunning Phisition, and could give Medicines for all kind of diseases, and ministred alwaies his pilles to euery man that came to him for remedie. It happened so, that a poore man of that place where he was, came to him, and complained, how he had lost his Asse, and praied him to giue him a medicine to finde his Asse againe; and he gaue vnto him the pilles, and bade him to receiue and take them, and he should find his Asse. And the poore man did so, and after went into the fields and pastures to looke after his Asse, and in so doing, the pils wrought so in his belly, that he must needs goe purge him, and went among the reeds, and there eased him, and there anon he found his Asse; whereof he being very ioyfull, ranne into the towne, and declared that by the medicine that he had receiued of the Physition, hee had found his Asse. Which thing knowne, all the simple people reputed him a very cunning man, albeit he could doe nothing but make pils. And thus many folkes are oft-times taken for wise and cunning, for he was reputed not only to heale all kinde of sicknesses, but also to giue medicines to find Asses after they were lost.

THere was in a certaine towne a Widdower that wed a Widdow, to haue her to his Wife, & at the last they were agreed and sure together. And whem a young woman being seruant with the said Widdow heard thereof, she came to her Mistresse and said to her, Alas Mistresse, what haue you done? Why, said the Mistresse? I haue heard say, said the Maid, that he is a perillous man, for he lay so oft, and knew so much his other wife, that shee died thereof, and I am sorry thereof that you should fall into the like case. To whom the Widdow answered and said: Certainely I desire to die, for here is nothing but sorrow and care in this world.

This was a courteous excuse of the Widdow.

Robt Barker

FINIS.

The Table of the Life and pleasant Fables of *Esop* and so forth of *Auian*, *Alfonce*, and *Poge* the Florentine.

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plume with his Lord. For to the poore it is not good to haue partage, and diuision with him which is rich and mighty, wherefore Esop rehearseth such a Fable. The colue, the goate and the sharpe, went once a hunting and tooke with them the Lion, & chased a hart, and when they came to part it, the Lion said: My Lords, I let you to wit, that the first part is mine, because I am your Lord the second, because I am stronger than ye be: the third, because I ran more swiftly than ye did: and whosoeuer toucheth the fourth part, he shall be my mortall enemy. And thus he toke from them the hart. Wherefore this fable sheweth that the poore should not keepe fellowship with the mighty, for he is neuer faithfull to the poore.

Of the Theefe and the Sunne.

NO man is changed by nature but an euill man may well haue a worse issue than himselfe. Esop hereof telleth vs a Fable. A theefe held the feast of his wedding, and his neighbours came where the feast was kept, and did worship to the theefe: and a wise man seeing that the neighbors of the theefe were ioyfull & glad, said to them, Ye make your gladnesse of that whereof ye should weepe, take heed then to my words, and vnderstand your ioy. The Sunne would once be married, but all the nations of the world were against him, and prayed Iupiter that he should keepe the Sun from wedding. Then Iupiter demanded of them the cause why they would not haue him to bee married: one of them said to Iupiter, thou knowest well there is but one Sunne, and yet he burneth vs all, and if he be married and haue any children, they shall destroy all mankinde: there

fore

for this fable sheweth, that we ought not to reioyce when we are in euill company.

Of the Wolfe and the Crane.

He that doth any good to an euill man, sinneth as Esop saith, for of the good done to the euill, commeth no profit, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. A Wolfe ate and deuoured a sheepe, of whose bones he had on in his throate, which he could not get out and sore it grieued him. Wherefore the Wolfe prayed the Crane, that he would draw out of his throat the bone. And the Crane put downe his long neck into his throat, and drew out the bone, whereby the Wolfe was whole. Then the Crane demanded of him her reward. And ẏ Wolfe answered, thou art right vnkinde and canst no good, remembrest thou not what I might haue done to thee? for when thou haddest thy necke within my throat, if I would I might haue bit it off. By this fable it appeareth that no good comes from an euill body.

Of two Bitches, how one lodged the other in time of littering.

Be not hasty to giue credit to the tales of flatterers, for by sweet words they deceiue good people, whereof Esop telleth vs this fable. There was a Bitch vpon a time, which would faine litter and bee deliuered of her young ones, and came to the habitation of another Bitch, and prayed her by sweete words, that shee would lend her a place where shee might litter her young ones, And that other Bitch lent to her, her bed and her house, weening that shee had therein done well. And when the bitch had littered, the good bitch said to her, that it was time that

she should goe and depart out of her house; and then the other bitch and her young dog ran vpon her, and bit her, and cast her forth of her owne house. In this manner many a one for doing good hath hurt and damage.

Of the Man and the serpent.

There is no good gotten by helping an euill person for he that helpeth, such, shall surely be ill rewarded for his labour: and he that saueth a theefe from the gallowes prouideth an enemie for himselfe: wherefore to withstand such, Esop rehearseth to vs this fable. There was sometime a man which found a Serpent within a Vine, and by reason of the great frost in the Winter, the Serpent was hard and almost dead for cold, wherefore the good man pitied her, and tooke her vp, and bare her into his house, and laid her before the fire, insomuch that she came againe to her former strength and vigour. And as soone as she was thus reuiued, she began to cry and hisse about the house, and to trouble the good-wife and her children. Wherefore the good-man would haue had her out of the house: but when he thought to haue taken her, she sprung about his necke and had almost strangled him. Euen so it fareth with them that doe good to wicked people, for instead of loue and kindnesse they shall haue malice and enuy.

Of the Lion and the Asse.

Of them that mocke others. Esop rehearseth this fable. There was an Asse which met with a Lion, to whom he said: My brother God saue thee; and the Lion shaked his head, and had great paine to with-hold his courage from deuouring the Asse.

Asse. But the Lion said to himselfe. It behoueth not the teeth of so noble a Lord as I am, to bite such a foule beast. For he that is wise must not hurt the foole, nor heed his words, but let him goe.

Of two Rats.

FArre better is it to liue in pouertie, than to liue richly being euer in danger: whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. There were two Rats, whereof one was great and fat, and held him in the celler of a rich man, and the other was poore and leane. On a day this great Rat went to sport him in the field, and mette by the way the leane Ratte, of the which he was receiued as well as he could into his poore caue or hole, and gaue him of such meat as he had. Then said the fat Rat, come thou with me, and I shall giue thee other meate. He went with him into the Towre, and both entred into the rich mans celler which was full of goods, and when they were there, the great Rat presented and gaue to the poore Rat diuers dantie meats, saying vnto him: Be merry and make good cheere; and as they were thus ioyfully eating, the butler came into the celler, and the great Rat ranne into his hole, but the poore Rat wist not whether to flee, but hid him behinde the doore with great feare and trembling, and the butler turned againe and saw him not. And when he was gone, the fat Rat came out of his hole, and called the leane Rat which was yet in feare, and said: Come hither and feare not to fill thy belly: but the poore Rat said, for very loue let me goe, for I had rather eat corne in the field and liue securely, than to eat dainty fare in such feare as thou doest here in this place. And

there-

therefore it is better to liue poorely and surely, then to liue richly, and without assurance.

Of the Eagle and the Fox.

THe puissant and mighty must doubt the feeble, as Esop rehearseth to vs a fable. There was an Eagle which came where young Foxes were, & toke away one of them, and gaue it to his young Eagles to feede them with. The Fox went after him and prayed him to restore it againe: But the Eagle said, he would not, for he was euer him Lord and master: Then the Fox full of subtiltie and malice, began to put together a great abundance of straw, and laid it vnder the tree where the Eagle and her young birds were, and kindled it with fire, and when the smoak and the flame began to rise vpward, the Eagle fearing the death of his young birds, restored to the Fox her yong one.

Of the Eagle and the Rauen.

HE that is well and surely garnished, yet by false counsell may be betrayed, as Esop telleth vs such a fable. An Eagle was sometime vpon a tree which held in his bill a nut which he could not breake: the Rauen came vnto him and said, thou shalt neuer breake it vntill thou flie as high as thou canst, and then let it fall vpon the stones; and the Eagle did so, and by that meanes lost his Nut. Thus many haue beene deceiued through false counsell.

Of the Rauen and the Fox.

THey that be glad and ioyfull at the praising of flatterers, oft times doe repent them, wherein Esop rehearseth to vs this Fable. A Rauen which was vpon a tree, held in his bill a peece of cheese, which

the

he For desired much to haue: wherefore he went and praised him in this manner, O gentle Rauen, thou art the gentlest of all other birds, for thy feathers be so faire so bright, and shining, and canst also well sing: if thou hadst thy voice clere, and shall thou wouldest be the most happy of all other birds. The fowle which heard the flattering words of the For, began to open his bill for to sing, and then the cheese fell to the ground, and the For toke it vp and ate it. And when the Rauen saw that for his owne glory he was deceiued, hee waxed heauy and sorrowfull, and it repented him that he had beleeued the For. Wherefore this fable teacheth us, that we ought not to bee glad or reioyce in the words of false and vnfaithfull folke, no to beleeue flatterers.

Of the Lion, the wild Bore, the Bull and the Asse.

When a man hath lost his dignity or office, hee must leaue his audacity or hardnesse, to the end that hee bee not hurt and mocked. Wherefore Esop sheweth such a fable. There was a Lion which in his youth was very fierce and cruell, and when he was come to age, there came to him a wild Bore, which with his teeth rent and burst a great peece of his body, and auenged the wrong that the Lion had done to him before time. After came vnto him a Bull, which smit and hurt him with his hornes: also an Asse came, which smote him in the forehead with her feet in most sroznefull manner. And then the Lion began to weepe, saying within himselfe in this manner: When I was young and strong, euery one dreaded and doubted mee, but now I am old and

ſæble, and nére my death, none ſetteth ought by m
but of euery one I am a kuſed: and becauſe tha
haue loſt my vigour and ſtrength, I haue alſo loſt
dignity and worſhip. Therefore this fable ſhew
how we muſt be méke in proſperity, leſt we be ſco
ned of all men in our aduerſity.

Of the Aſſe and the young Dogge.

NO man ought to meddle with that which h
cannot doe. Wherefore Eſop rehearſeth i
a fable, of an Aſſe which was in the houſe of a Lo
which had a little Dog which he loued well, and
upon his table. And the little Dog fawned and le
vpon his gowne, and to all them that were in t
houſe he ſhewed his loue: wherefore the Aſſe
enuious, and ſaid in himſelfe. If my Lord and his ſ
uants loue this miſcreant beaſt that ſheweth lo
towards them, by all reaſon they muſt loue me if
ſhew kindneſſe towards them: and therefore fro
henceforth I will take my diſport, and make top
play with my Lord and his ſeruants. And as t
Aſſe was in his thought and imagination, it happ
ned that hee ſaw his Lord entering into the hou
The Aſſe then began to dance: and to make chee
and to ſing with his ſweete voice: and approchi
towards his Lord, leapt vpon his ſhoulder, and b
gan to kiſſe and licke him. The Lord then began
cry out with a loud voice, and ſaid, Let this fo
whoreſon that hurteth me ſo ſore be well beaten a
put away. Then the Lords ſeruants toke gre
ſtaues, and began to ſmite vpon the poore Aſſe, n
beate him ſore that he had no more courage to dan
or leape vpon his Maſter.

Of the Lion and the Rat.

The mighty and puissant must forgiue the feeble, for oft the little may well giue aide and help vnto the great: whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, of a Lion which slept in a forrest, and the Rats disporting them about him, it hapned that they went vpon the Lion, whereat he awaked, and with his claw he toke one of them: When the Rat saw her selfe thus taken, shee said vnto the Lion: My Lord, I pray you pardon me, for little shall you winne by my death, and I thought not to displease you. Then thought the Lion with himselfe, that it were no worship to put her to death, wherefore he forgaue her and set her goe. After this, it hapned that the same Lion was taken in a snare, whereupon he began to cry and make sorrow: and when the Rat heard him cry, she approached, and demanded what he ayled: And the Lion said: Seest thou not how I am taken and bound with this line: Then said the Rat, My Lord, I will not be vnkinde, but shall euer remember your great mercie toward me, and withall if I can I shall now helpe you. The Rat then began to bite the cord, and so long gnawed thereon, that the cord brake in sunder, and the Lion escaped.

Therefore this fable teacheth, how that a mighty man ought not to despise the little or meane, for he that cannot hurt by his strength may giue help by his diligent endeauour.

Of the young Kite, and his Mother.

He that euer doth euill, ought not to haue trust that his prayer should be heard. Of which matter Esop, rehearseth this Fable. There was a Kite

which was sicke, in so much that he had no trust recouer his health. And as he saw himselfe wea and feeble, he prayed his mother that she would p vnto her gods for him. His mother answered h My son, thou hast greatly offended and blaspheme the gods that now they will auenge them on the, thou praiest not to them for pity nor loue, but for e dread: for he which leadeth an euill life & in his ling is obstinate, ought not to haue hope to be del red of his euill. For when one is fallen into extre sickenesse, then is the time come that he must be p according to his deeds: for he that offendeth other his prosperity, shall find few friends when he fal into aduersitie.

Of the Swallow and other birds.

HE that beleeueth not good counsell, shall faile to be euill counselled, wherefore Esop hearseth to vs this fable following. a pl man sowed Linseed, & the Swallow seing that of same Linseed, men might haue nets and gins, wa said to all other birds: Come ye all with me, an vs pluck vp this, for if we let it grow, the labo shall make gins and nets to take vs all: but all birds dispraised her counsell. Then the swallow ting this, went and harboured her selfe in the pl mans house. And when the flare was growne & led vp, the labourer made ginnes and nets to t biros, wherewith he take euery day diuers of t birds, and brought them home to his house. Wh the Swallow seing, said, I told you of this bu but you would not be warned by me.

The end of the first Booke.

The Prologue of the second Booke.

ALL manner of fables are found to shew men what they should ensue and follow, and also, what they ought to leaue and flée: for Fable is as much to say in Poetry, as words in Theologie. And therefore I write fables to shew the good conditions of good men: for the Law is giuen for trespassers and misdoers: and because the good and iust are not subiect to the Law, as we finde and read of the Athenians, which liuing after the law of Nature, and also at their libertie, would néedes haue a King for to punish all euill; but because they were not accustomed to be informed, when any of them was corrected and punished, they were greatly troubled when their new King erected any Iustice: because that afore that time, they had neuer borne vnder any mans subiection, it was grieuous to them to be in seruitude, therefore they were sorrowfull that euer they had demanded any King. Against the which Esop rehearseth this fable following.

The first Fable is of the Frogges, and of Iupiter.

NO thing is so good as to liue iustly and at liberty, for freedome and liberty is better than any gold or siluer: whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable: Diuers frogs were in dyches and ponds, at their own liberty, they all together with one consent made request vnto Iupiter, that he would giue them a King, and Iupiter thereof began

to marueil, and for their King he caſt them downe a great peece of wood which with the fall thereof made a great ſound in the water, whereof they had great dread and feare; and after as they approched to their King for to make him obeyſance, and perceiued that it was but a peece of wood, they turned againe to Iupiter, praying him earneſtly that he would giue to them another King. Then Iupiter gaue to them the Heron to be their King. Then the Heron entred into the water, and ate them one after another. And when the Frogs ſaw that their King did ſo deuoure them, they began to weepe to Iupiter, and to ſay vnto him: Right high and mighty Iupiter, we pray thee to deliuer vs from the throte of this Tyrant, which eateth vs one after another. And then ſaid Iupiter to them, the King which ye haue demanded ſhall be your Maſter. Wherefore, when men haue that which is conuenient, they ought to be ioyfull and glad, and he that hath liberty, ought to kéep it well, for nothing is better than liberty, for liberty ſhould not be ſold for al the gold and ſiluer in the world.

Of the Doues, the Kite, and the Sparhawke.

HE that putteth himſelfe vnder the ſafegard or protection of the euill, ſhall aſke helpe of them in time of néed, and get none, according to this preſent fable of the Doues which requeſted a Sparhawke to be their King, for to kéepe them from the Kite, and when the Sparhawke was made King ouer them, he begainne to deuore them: Then the Doues ſaid among themſelues, that better it were for

for vs to suffer of ỹ Rite, than to be subiects vnto the Sparhawke, and to be martyred as we be, but here of we be well worthy, for we our selues are the onely cause of this mischiefe Wherefore it is good wisdome for men to thinke well what will be the end, ere they begin any thing.

Of the theefe and the Dog.

If a man giue any thing, he that receiueth it, ought to take hede to what end it is giuen, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a theefe that came on a night into a mans house for to haue robbed him, and the good mans Dogge began to barke at him and then the theefe did cast at him a peece of bread: and then the dog said to him: thou castest this bread for no good will, but onely to the end that I should hold my peace, to the intent that thou maist rob my Master; and therefore it were not good for mé, that for a morsell of bread I should lose my life, wherefore goe thy way, or else I shall awake my Master and all his houshold. The dog then began to barke, and the theefe fled: and thus by couetousnesse many haue receiued great gifts, which haue caused them to lose their heads. Wherefore it is good to consider, and looke well to what intent the gift is giuen, to the end that none may be betrayed by gifts, neither ought any for gifts to worke treason.

Of the Wolfe and the Sow.

A man ought not to beleeue all that he heareth, whereof Esop rehearseth such a Fable, of a Wolfe which came towards a Sow, which kept and made sorrow for the great paine that shee felt, because she was great with Pig. And the Wolfe came

to her, saying: my sister, make the young pigs secure for joyfully and with good will I shall serue and helpe thee. And the Sow then said to him, goe forth on thy way, for I haue no need of the helpe of such a seruant: for as long as thou shalt stand here, I shall not deliuer me of my charge: for thou desirest nothing els but to haue them and eat them. The Wolfe then went his way, and anone the Sow was deliuered of her pigs: but if she had beleeued him, she had had a sorrowfull birth. And thus he that foolishly beleeueth, foolishly it happeneth to him.

Of the Mountaine that shooke.

RIght so it happeneth, that he that shaketh, hath dread and is fearefull whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs such a fable, of a hill which began to tremble and shake, because of the Mole that delued. And as the folke saw that the earth began to shake, they were sore afraid, and durst not come nigh the mountaine. but when they knew it was long of the Mole, their doubt and dread was turned to ioy, and they began all to laugh. Therefore men ought not to beleeue all folke which be full of great words: for some men will greatly feare where no danger is.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

THe birth causeth not a man so much to get some friends, as doth the goodnesse whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable, of a Wolfe which saw a Lambe among a great heard of Goates, the which Lambe sucked a Goate, and the Wolfe said to him: this Goate is not thy mother, goe and seeke her at the mountaine, for she shall nourish thee more sweetly and more tenderly than the Goate will: and the

Lambe

Lambe answered him: This Goate nourisheth me in stead of my mother, for she leaueth to me her paps sooner than to any of her owne children, and yet more better it is for me to be here among these Goates, than to depart from hence, and to fall into thy throat and be deuoured. Therefore he is a foole, which being in freedome or surety, putteth himselfe in danger of death: for better it is to liue hardly in surety, than swetly in perile and danger.

Of the old Dog and his Master.

MEn ought not to dispraise the ancient, nor to put them backe, for if thou bee young, thou oughtest to desire greatly to come to bee old, also thou oughtest to praise the acts or deeds, which they haue done in their young age, whereof Esop reheatseth to vs such a fable. There was a Lord which had a dog, the which in his youth had beene of good kind: as namely to chase and hunt, and to haue great lust to run and take the wild beasts. And when this dogge was come to old age, and that he could no more run, it hapned once that he let goe and escaped from him a Hare, wherefore his Master was wroth and angry, and in great rage began to beat him. Then said the Dogge vnto him, My Master, for good seruice thou yeldest me euill: for in my young age and prosperity, I serued thee right well, and now that I am come to my old age, thou hatest and settest me backe. Remember, I pray thee how that in my young age I was strong and lustie, and now when I am old and feeble, thou settest nothing by me. Therefore, who so doth any good in his youth, in his old age he shall not continue in the

vertues

uortues which he possessed in his youth.

Of the Hares, and the Frogs.

MEN say commonly, that as the time goeth, so much folkes goe, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, that he which beholdeth the euill of other, must haue patience of the euill which may come vpon himselfe. For sometimes as a hunter chased through the fields and wood, the Hares began to flee for feare, and as they ran, they passed through a meadow full of Frogges, and when the frogges saw the Hares run, they began also to run and flee as fast. Then one of the hares seeing them so fearfull, said to his fellowes: let vs be no more so fearefull, for we be not alone in dread, but all these frogs be in doubt as well as we: therefore we ought not to despaire, but trust and hope to liue, and if a little aduersity come vpon vs, we must endeauour to beare it patiently, for the time will one day come, that we shall be out of all feare and danger. Therefore in the vnhappy and vnfortunate time, men ought not to distrust, but euer to be in hope, that a time of better hap will come: euen as peace commeth after warre, and faire weather after raine.

Of the Wolfe and the Kid.

GOod children ought to keepe the commandements of their parents and friends, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Goate which had littered her young kid. And hunger tooke her, so that she would haue gone into the fields for to haue eaten some grasse, wherefore she said to her young kid, My childe, beware that if the Wolfe come hither to eat thee, that thou open not the

the doore to him. When the Goate was gone, the Wolfe came to the dore: and the Kidde answered him, Goe hence euill and false beast, for well I see thee through the hole, that to haue me thou fainest the voice of my mother, and therefore I shall keepe me wel from opening the doore. Thus good children ought to mark and lay vp in their harts the precepts of their parents, for many a one is lost and vndone for lacke of obedience.

Of the Poore Man and the Serpent.

HE that applies himselfe to doe other men harme ought not to thinke himselfe secure, wherefore Esop rehearseth this Fable. There was a Serpent which came into the house of a poore man, and liued of that which fell from the poore mans table, for the which thing there hapned great fortune to this man, and he became very rich. But on a day this man was angry against the Serpent, and tooke a sword & smote at him, wherefore the Serpent went out of the house, and came no more thither againe. A little after, this man fell againe into great pouertie, and then he knew, that by fortune of the Serpent he was become rich, wherefore it repented him that he had driuen away the Serpent. Then he went and humbled himselfe to the Serpent, saying: I pray thee that thou wilt pardon mee the offence that I haue done thee. And the Serpent said: Seeing thou repentest thee of thy misdeede, I forgiue thee: but as long as I shall liue, I shall remember thy malice: for as thou hurtest me once, so maist thou againe. Wherefore that which was once euill, shall euer so be held, men ought therefore not to insult ouer him, of

whom

the horse answered thus, Assure thy selfe of it, for hereto shall I put all my diligence and strength, leape on my backe, and doe after my counsell: and then the Hunter lept vpon the Horse, and began to runne him after the Hart: and when the Hart saw him come he fled, but by reason that the Hart ran faster than the horse did, he scaped from them and saued himselfe. And when the horse felt himselfe very wearie, and that he might no more runne, hee said to the hunter in this manner, light from my backe for I may beare thee no more, and I haue missed of my prey. Then said the hunter to the horse, seeing thou art entred into my hands, thou shalt not yet escape from me thus, thou hast the bridle in thy mouth, whereby thou maiest be kept still and restrained, and though thou wilt leape the saddle shall keepe me and if thou wilt cast thy seete from thee I haue good spurres to constraine thee and make thee to go whether thou wilt or no, where I will haue thee: therefore keep thy selfe well, that thou shew not thy selfe rebellious vnto me. It is not good therefore for a man to put himselfe in subiection to a nother, that there by he may be auenged of his aduersary, for who so submisseth himseife vnder the might of another, is bound to doe his will.

Of the Asse and the Lion.

GReat callers by their high and loud cry, suppose thereby to make folke afraid, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was an Asse which sometime met with a Lion, to whom he said: Let vs both goe vp to the top of a mountaine, and I shall shew thee how the beasts be afraid of me: and the Lion began to smile, and answered the Asse, goe

we

we my brother; and when they were vpon the top of the hill, the Asse began to cry, and the Foxes and Hares began to flee. When the Asse saw them flee, he said to the Lion, sæst thou not how ye Beasts dread and doubt me? The Lion said, I had also beene fearefull of thy voyce, if I had not knowne verily ye thou art ant an Asse. Wherefore men need not to doubt him which aduanceth himselfe to doe that he cannot doe. Neither need men to feare a sæle for his noise, nor his great voice.

Of the Hawke and other birds.

THe hypocrites make to God a beard of straw, as in this fable of a Hawk, which sometime fained that he would celebrate a natiuity, or hold a very great feast, the which should be kept within a temple: and vnto this feast and solemnity, he inuited and summoned all the small Birds, to which they came. And incontinent as they were all come to the feast, and entred into the temple, the Hawke did shut the gate, and put them all to death one after another. Wherefore this fable sheweth vnto us, how we must keepe our selues from all them which vnder faire seeming haue a false heart, for those be hypocrites, and deceiuers of God and the world.

Of the Fox and the Lion.

HE is well aduised that taketh warning by the perill of other men, as this fable sheweth, of a Lion which sometime fained himselfe sicke, and when the beasts knew that the Lion was sicke, they would goe all to visit and see him as their King, and incontinent as the beasts entred into his house to see him, he deuoured them. And when the Foxes were come

come to the gate for to haue visited the Lion, they knew well the fallace and falshood of the Lion, and saluted him at the entry of the gate, but entred not within: and when the Lion saw that they would not enter into his house, he demanded of them why they would not come in. Then one of the Foxes said to him, We perceiue well by the traces, þ all those beasts which haue entred into thy house come not out againe, wherefore we thinke, that if wee should once enter in, wee should come no more out. He therefore is to be accounted wise, which taketh warning by other mens harms.

Of the Asse and the Wolfe.

Faith and truth from an euill man is seldome to be expected. As Esop rehearseth by this fable, of a Wolfe which visited an Asse which was very sicke, the wolfe began to feele and touch him, and demanded of him and said, My brother & friend, whereabout is thy sore? and the Asse said to him: euen in that place where thou touchest: and then the Wolfe faining to helpe, began to bite and smite him. Men must therefore beware of flatterers, for they say one thing, and doe another.

Of the Hedgehog and the three Kids.

Those that be young ought not to mock & scorne their elders, as Esop sheweth by this fable of three little Goates which mocked a great Hedgehogge which went before a Wolfe: and when he perceiued their scorning, he said vnto them, Ah poore soules, ye wot not wherefore I flee, if yee wist and knew the perill, ye would not mocke mee. Wherefore, when men see the great and mighty be fearefull, the

the lesse and feeble ought not to thinke themselues safe and sure: for when a towne is taken by hazard of war the whole country about ought to tremble & be afraid.

Of the Man and the Lion

MEn ought not to beleeue the Painter, but the truth and the deed. As men may see by this present Fable, of a man and a Lion, which had strife together, and were in great dissention, for to wit and know which of them was more strong. The man said he was stronger than the Lion, and for to haue his saying verified, shewed to the Lion a picture, whereas a man had victory ouer a Lion, and the picture of Samson the strong. Then said the Lion vnto the man, if the Lions could make pictures as well as men, it should be here shewen, how the Lion had victory ouer the men: and now (quoth he) I shall shew thee the proofe hereof: then the Lion ledde the man to a great pit, and there they fought together, but the Lion cast the man into the pit, and submitted him to his subiection, saying: Thou man, now knowest thou well which of vs two be the stronger, and therefore by the worke, the workman may be knowne.

Of the Camell and the Fly.

HEE that hath no might ought not to praise himselfe, as Esop sheweth by this fable. It hapned that a Fly because of the Camels haire, leapt to the backe of the Camell which was loaden, and was borne of him all the day: and when they had gone a great way, and that the Camell came to his Inne, and was put in the stable, the Fly leapt from him to the

the ground beſide the foote of the Camell; and then ſaid to the Camell, I haue pitty of thee, and am come downe from thy back, becauſe I would no more be burthenſome vnto thee. And the Camell ſaid to the Fly, I thanke thee, howbeit I am not ſore laden of thee. And therefore, of him which may not greatly hurt, little eſtimation is to be made.

Of the Ant and the Creket.

NEceſſary it is for euery man to prouide for himſelfe in ſummer, ſuch things whereof hee ſhall haue need in winter, as thou maiſt ſee by this preſent Fable. There was a Creket which in the winter time demanded of the Ant ſome corne to eat. And then the Ant ſaid to the Creket, what haſt thou done all the ſummer laſt paſt? and the Creket anſwered, I haue ſung. Then ſaid ỹ Ant, Of my Corne thou getteſt none: for if thou haue ſung all the Summer, goe dance all the Winter. By which we learne, that there is a time ordained for labour, as well as a time for reſt. For hee that will not worke when hee ſhould, ſhall want when he would not.

Of the Pilgrim, and the ſword.

ONe euill man may be cauſe of great perill and loſſe to many folkes, as Eſop rehearſeth by this preſent fable. There was a Pilgrim which by chance found in the way a ſword, and hee asked of the ſword what is he that hath loſt thee? And the ſword anſwered to him, One man alone hath loſt me, but many a one I haue loſt. And therefore an euill man may well be loſt, but ere he be loſt he may well let many a one. For by euill man, may come into a countrey mans euils.

Of

Of the sheepe and the Crow.

NOne ought to doe iniurie, nor despise the poore innocents or simple ones: As rehearseth this present fable of a Crow, which set her selfe on the backe of a Sheepe. And when the Sheepe had borne her a great while, she said to her, thou shalt keep thy selfe well to set thee vpon a dogge. Then the Crow said to the sheepe, thinkest thou not poore innocent, but that I wot well with whom I play: for I am old and malicious, and my kind is to harme all innocents, and to be a friend vnto the euill. Wherefore this Fable sheweth, that there be folke of such kinds as they will doe no good worke, but onely let and hinder the innocent and simple.

Of the Tree and the Reede.

NOne ought to be proud against his Lord, but to humble himselfe vntohim, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a great Tree which would neuer bow for any winde, and the Reede which was at his feet, bowed euery way euen as the winde pleased. Whereupon the Tree said to the Reede, why doest thou not stand still as I doe? and the Reede answered, I haue not the might that thou hast. And the Tree said to the Reede proudly, then haue I more strength than thou. And anon after, there came a great wind which threw downe the said Tree to the ground, and the Reede abode vp still. Thus we learne hereby, that the proud ere trey be aware are suddenly throwne downe, and the humble many times are exalted.

The end of the fourth booke.

Here

Here beginneth the fifth Booke, whereof the first Fable is of the Mule, the Wolfe and the Fox.

MEn call many folke Asses that bee very subtile and wise, and many thinke themselues wise, which deserue to be accounted Asses, as appeareth by this Fable: there was a Mule which ate grasse in a meddow neare a great Forrest, to whom came a Fore, which demanded of him and said: What art thou? And the Mule answered, I am a beast. And the Fox said, I doe not aske that of thee, but I aske who was thy Father? and the Mule answered. My great father was a horse. And the Fox said againe, I doe not aske that, but onely that thou tell me what is thy name. And the Mule said I know not because I was little when my father died: neuertheleſſe to the end that my name should not bee forgotten, my father made it to bee written vnder my left foot behind, wherefore if thou wilt know my name, looke vnder my foote. And when the Fox vnderstood the falshood of the Mule, he went againe into the forrest and met the Wolfe, to whom he said: Ha miscreant beast, what doest thou here? come with me, and into thy hands I shall put a good prey to fill thy belly. Looke in yonder meddow, and there thou shalt find a good fat beast, with that which thy hunger may bee satisfied. The Wolfe went presently into the meddow, and finding there the Mule, hee said vnto him in this manner: Who art thou? and the

Mule

Mule answered the Wolfe, saying, I am a Beast. The Wolfe said to him, that is not the thing which I aske of thee, but tell me how thou art named. The Mule said, I wot not, but nevertheless, if thou wilt know my name, thou shalt find it written under my left foot behinde. Then the Wolfe said, I pray thee shew it me, and the Mule lift up his foot and as the Wolfe looked thereon, the Mule gaue him such a stroake there with on the fore head, that almost the braines fell out of his head. And then the Fox which was behinde a bow and saw all the matter, began to laugh, and mocke the Wolfe, saying: Foule beast, thou wottest well that thou canst not read, wherefore euill thereof is come to thee, thy selfe being cause of it. For none ought to take vpon him the thing, which he cannot doe, lest by shewing his ignorance he be willing to be mocked for his labour.

Of the Bore and the Wolfe.

There are some that presume for to be great persons; and dispraise their owne parents, which at the last doe become poore, and fall into great dishonour: as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Bore among a heard of Swine, and for to haue dominion and lordship euer them, hee began to make a great rumor and shewed his great teeth to make the other swine afraid: but because they knew him, they set nought by him, wherefore he was much displeased; and went thence vnto the heard of Sheepe and Lambs. And when he was there, he began to make a great rumor, and shewed them his great teeth. And when the Lambes heard him, they were very much afraid, and began to shake for feare. Then said the

Boze within himselfe, Here is the place wherein I must abide and dwell, for here I shall be greatly worshipped, for euery one quaketh for feare of me. Then came the Wolfe thither for to haue gotten some prey, and the lambes began to flee: but the bore as proud would not stirre him, ne goe from the place because he supposed himselfe Lord, but the Wolfe tooke him, and bare him into the wood for to eat him. And as the wolfe bare him, it happened that he passed before the heard of swine which the boze had left, and when the boze perceiued and knew them, he cryed aloud and prayed them for Gods loue that they would helpe him, saying, that without their helpe he was but dead. And then the swine all with one consent, went and recouered their fellow, and slew the Wolfe. When the Boze was thus deliuered, and saw himselfe among the swine, he began to haue shame, because he was thus departed and gon from their fellowshippe, and said to them, My brethren and friends, I am well worthy to suffer this paine, because I haue gone and departed from you. Wherefore, he that is well, ought so to kepe himselfe, for many by pride couet to be great Lords, and oft fall thereby into great ponertie.

Of the Fox and the Cocke.

Ofttimes much speech hurteth, as rehearseth this Fable. There was a For which came to a Cock and said, I would faine know if thou canst sing, as well as thy father could. And the Cocke shut his eyes and began to crow and sing. And then the For caught him and carried him away. And the people of the towne cried and said, the for beareth away the Cocke.

cocke. Then the Cocke said thus to the fox, My Lord, vnderstandest thou not that the people say, thou bearest away their cocke, tell to them that it is thine and not theirs. An as the fox said, It is not yours but mine, the Cocke escaped from the foxes mouth, and flew vp into a tree, and then the Cocke said to the fox, Now thou liest, for I am theirs and not thine. And then the fox began to hit the earth both with his mouth and head, saying, Mouth thou hast spoken too much, thou mightest haue eaten the Cocke, had it not beene for thy many words. Thus we see that ouermuch talking letteth, and too much crowing smarteth keepe thy selfe therefore from ouermany words, lest afterward it repent thee.

Of the Dragon and the Labourer.

NOne ought to render euill for good, and they that helpe, ought not to be hurt, as this fable sheweth, of a Dragon which was within a riuer and as the riuer was diminished of water, the Dragon abode at the riuer, which was all drie, and thus for lacke of water hee could not stirre him. A labourer or villaine came that way, and demanded of the Dragon, saying: what dost thou here? and the Dragon said, here I am without water, without the which I cannot moue, but if thou wilt bind me, and set me vpon thy Asse, and lead me into a riuer. I shall giue thee abundance of gold and siluer: and the villaine for couetousnesse bound him and led him into the riuer: and when he had vnbound him, hee demanded of him his salarie or payment. The Dragon said to him, because thou hast unbound me thou wilt bee paid, and because that I am now hungry, I will eat thee: and

the villaine answered and said, for my labour will thou eat and devoure me? And as they striued together, the for being within the Forest, and hearing their questioning, came to him and said in this manner. Strive ye no more together, for I will accord and make peace betwixt you, let each of you tell to me his reason, for to wet which of you have right. And when each of them had told his tale The for said to the villaine, shew to me how thou vnboundest the Dragon, that I may give thereof a lawfull sentence. And the villaine, put the Dragon vpon his Asse, and bound him as he did before. Then the for demanded of the Dragon, held he thee so fast bound as thou art now? and the Dragon answered, Yea my Lord, and yet more hard. And the for said to the villaine, bind her yet more harder, for he that well bindeth well he can vnbind. And when the Dragon was fast bound, the for said to the villaine, beare him againe where thou didst first binde him, and there leaue him bound as he is now, and so he shall not eat and devoure thee, For he that doth euill, shall be rewarded with euill: and they that offer harme to the poore shall have punishment from God.

Of the Fox and the Cat.

Many there be which advance themselues, and thinke that they be wise and subtill, which be starke fooles and know nothing, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a for that sometime met with a Cat, to whom hee said, My Gossip, God give you good day. And the Cat said, My Lord, God give you good life. And then the for demanded of him:

my

my gossip, what canst thou doe? And the Cat said vnto him, I can leape a little, and the fox said to him, certainely thou art not worthy to liue, because thou canst doe nothing. And because that the Cat was angry at the Foxes words, he demanded of the Fox and said, Gossip what canst thou doe? A thousand sundry wiles haue I, said the Fox, for I haue a sacke full of sciences and wiles, and I am so great a scholler that none can deceiue me. And as they were thus talking together, the Cat perceiued a Knight comming towards them, which had many Dogges with him, wherefore hee said to the Fox, my gossip, certainely I see a Knight comming hitherward, which hath with him many dogges, the which as ye know be our enemies. The fox answered, My gossip, thou speakest like a coward, and one that is affraid, let him come, and care not thou. And incontinent the dogges perceiued the cat and the fox, and began to run vpon them: and when the fox saw them come, he said to the Cat: Let vs flee gossip, to whom the Cat answered: certainly gossip there is no need: neuertheleſſe the fox beleeued not the Cat, but fled, and ran as fast as he could to saue him, and the Cat leapt vp into a tree and saued her selfe. Now shall we see who shall play best for to preserue and saue himselfe. When the Cat was vpon the tree, she looked about her, and saw how the dogges held the fox with their teeth to whom she cried and said, O my gossip and subtile fox, of a thousand wiles that thou canst doe, let me now see one of them. The fox answered not, but he was killed of the dogges, and the Cat escaped. Wherefore the wise ought not to dispraise the

ſimple, for ſome are ſuppoſed to be wiſe, and yet are very fooles.

Of the Hee Goat and the Wolfe.

HE that is fable, ought not to arme himſelfe againſt the ſtrong, as thearſeth this fable, of a Wolfe which ſome time ranne faſt after a hee Goate, and the hee Goate for to ſave himſelfe leapt upon a rocke, and the Wolfe beſieged him. And after when they had dwelled there two or three dates, the wolfe began to wax hungry, and the goat to have thirſt. And thus the Wolfe went for to eat, and the Goat to drinke. And as the Goat dranke, he ſaw his ſhadow in the water, and beholding his ſhadow, ſaid thus within himſelfe, Haſt thou ſo faire legges, ſo faire a beard, and ſo faire hornes, and haſt feare of the Wolfe? If it happen that he come againe, I will charge him well and keepe him well, and he ſhall have no charge over me. And the Wolfe which held his peace, and harkned what he ſaid, tooke him by one of his legges ſaying thus: What words be theſe that thou doeſt ſay brother hee Goate? And when the goat ſaw that he was taken tardy, hee thus anſwered the Wolfe, O my Lord, I ſay nothing, have pitty on me, I know well that I have offended: notwithſtanding, the Wolfe tooke him by the necke and ſtrangled him. Therefore it is a very great folly for thoſe that are feeble, to make any warre againſt the mighty.

Of the Wolfe and the Aſſe.

NOne ought to beleeve lightly the counſell of him whom he muſt hurt, as you may ſee by this fable. There was a Wolfe which met with an Aſſe, to whom hee ſaid, My brother, I am hungry,

hungry, wherefore I must néds eate thée. And the Asse answered him right gently: My Lord, with me thou maiest doe what thou wilt, for if thou eatest me, thou shalt put me out of great paine: but I pray thée, if thou wilt eat me, that thou vouchsafe to eat, me out of the high way: for well thou knowest that I bring home raisins from the Vine, and the corne from the fields, also thou knowest that I beare home the wood from the Forrest, and when my Master will edifie some building, I must goe fetch the stones from the mountaine, and also I beare the corne to the mill, and after I beare home the meale, and briefly I was borne in a cursed houre, for to all paine, and to all labour I am subiect: for the which I would not that thou shouldest eat me here in the high way, for the great shame that might come thereof to me: but I instantly require thée, that thou wilt heare my counsell, namely, that we goe into the forrest, and thou shalt bind me by the brest as thy seruant, and I shall bind thee by the neck as my master, and thou shalt leade me before thee into the wood whereseuer thou wilt, to the end that there thou maiest more secretly eat me. To this the Wolfe accorded, and said, I am willing to doe so. And when they were come into the forrest, they bound each other in the manner as is aforesaid. And when they were bound, the Wolfe said to the Asse, goe whither thou wilt, and goe before to shew the way, and the Asse went before, and led the wolfe into the right way of his masters house. And when the Wolfe began to know the way, hee said to the Asse: We goe not the right way. To the which the Asse answered, My Lord, say not so, for

certainely this is the right way, but for all that the Wolfe would haue gone another way. Neuertheleſſe, the Aſſe led him to the houſe of his Maſter, and as his Maſter and all his men ſaw the Aſſe draw the wolfe after him, and would haue entred into the houſe, they came out with clubs and ſtaues, and ſmote on the Wolfe, and as one of them would haue ſmitten a great ſtroake vpon the Wolfes head, he brake the cord wherwith he was bound, and ſo he eſcaped and ranne away from them ſore hurt and beaten. And the Aſſe for great ioy that ſhe was ſo eſcaped from the Wolfe, began to ſing, and the wolfe which was vpon the mountaine, hearing the voice of the Aſſe, began to ſay to himſelfe: thou maieſt be merrie and glad, but I ſhall keepe thee well another time. that thou ſhalt not bind me as thou haſt done. And therefore it is a great folly to beleeue the counſell of him whom men would hurt, and to put himſelfe in his ſubiection. He that hath beene once beguiled, muſt take heed another time, for he to whom men purpoſe to doe ſome euill turne, when they haue him at aduantage, they muſt keepe them on their ſure ſide.

Of the Serpent and the Labourer.

THe author of this booke rehearſeth ſuch another fable, and of ſuch meaning as the precedent, that is to wit, that men ſhould not beleeue him vnto whom they haue done euill, ſaying: that ſometime in harueſt time a labourer went to ſee his goods in the fields, the which met in his way a Serpent, and with a ſtaffe which he bare in his hand, ſmote the ſaid ſerpent, and gaue him ſuch a ſtroake on the head, that he almoſt ſlew him. Then the Serpent feeling himſelfe

selfe sore hurt, hee went from the man, and entred into his house, & said vnto the Labourer, O euill friend thou hast beaten me, but I warne thee, that thou neuer beleeue him vnto whom thou hast done any euill. Of which words the labourer made little account, and went forth on his way. It shortly befell, that this Labourer went againe that way for to eare his ground. To whom the Serpent said, O my friend, whither goest thou? and the labourer said vnto him, I goe to eare and plow my ground. And he said vnto him, sowe not to much; for this yeere shall be full of raine, and great abundance of water shall fall. But the labourer said, I beleeue not him whom I haue sometime done any euill, and without moe words. the labourer went forth on his way, and beleeued not the serpent, but made all his ground to be sowed with as much corne as he might. And the same yeere fell great store of water, wherefore the said Labourer had but little corne, for the most part of the corne that he had sowne, perished because of the great raine. And the next yeere following, as the Labourer passed by the hole of the aforesaid Serpent, and went to sow his ground, the Serpent demanded of him, My friend, whither goest thou? The Labourer answered, I goe to sow my ground with corne and other graine, such as I hope shall be necessarie for me in time to come. Then said the Serpent, My friend, sow but little corne, for the summer next comming shall be so hote, that by drinesse and heate, all the corne sowne in the earth shall perish: but beleeue not him to whom thou hast done any euill. And without any moe speech the Labourer went and thought of the words of the

serpent

serpent, and wéening that the serpent had said so to deceiue him, he sowed as much corne and other graine as he might, and it happened that the Summer next follo'wing was such as is abouesaid, wherefore the man was beguiled, for he gathered the same yére nothing. The next yére following, the said labourer went againe for to eare his ground: and as the serpent saw him come, hée demanded of the Labourer in this manner: My friend, whi'ther goest thou? Then answered the labourer, I goe to eare my land. Then said the serpent, My friend, sow not too much, ne too little of corne and other graine, sow betweene both: Neuertheless, beléeue not him vnto whom thou hast done euill: and I tell thee that this yeare shall be more temperate and fertile of all manner of corne that thou sowest. The labourer had no sooner heard these words, but forthwith he went his way, and did as the serpent had said, and that yére he gathered much good, because of the good disposition of the time. And on a day the same yére, the Serpent met the same labourer comming from harueſt, vnto whom he said, Now say my friend, hast thou not found this yeere great plenty of good, as I told thee before? And the labourer answered, yea certainly, whereof I thanke thée. And then the serpent demanded of him remuneration, or reward. And the labourer demanded what he would haue, the serpent said, I demand of thée nothing, but onely that to morrow in the morning thou send me a dishfull of milke by some of thy children. And then the serpent shewed the labourer the hole of his dwelling, and said vnto him, Tell thy sonne that he bring the milke hither,

but

but take hed to that, the other while I told the that thou beleuest not him to whom thou hast done euill. And anon after, when these things were said, the labourer went homeward, and in the morning he tooke his sonne a dishfull of milke, and he carried it to the serpent, and set it before the hole: and the serpent came out, and slew the childe with his venomes And when the labourer came to the field, passing by the hole of the said serpent, he found his sonne lying dead vpon the ground. Then the labourer began to cry with a loud voice, as one full of sorrow or heauinesse saying: Ha cursed & euill serpent, venomous and false traitor, thou hast deceiued me. A wicked and deceitfull beast, full of contagious euill, thou hast slaine my sonne. And the serpent said vnto him, I will well that thou know that I haue not slaine him sorowfully, ne without cause, but for to auenge me of the hurt that thou hast done to me without cause, and hast not amended it. Remembrest thou not how oft I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not beleeue him vnto whom thou hast done euill? Remember it now that I am auenged of thee. This Fable sheweth, how men ought not to beleeue or giue any credit to them whom they haue done some harme in time past. For old hatred is sone renued, and malice will not be satisfied without working euill.

Of the Fox, the Wolfe, and the Lion.

HE that hath bene endamaged by another, ought not to take vengeance by the tongue, in giuing iniurious words, because such vengeance is dishonest, as this present fable following sheweth. Some-

time

time there was a Fox that ate fish in a riuer. It happened that the wolfe came that way, and when he saw the fox which ate with so great appetite, he began to say, my brother giue me some fish, And the Fox answered him, Alas my Lord, It behoueth not that ye eat the reliefe of my table, but for the worship of your person I shall counsell you well. Doe so much as get you a basket, and I shall teach you how yee shall take fish, to the end that ye may alwaies take some when ye be hungry. And the Wolfe went into the street, and stole a basket, and brought it with him, and the fox tooke the basket, and bound it with a cord at the wolfes taile, and when it was well bound, the Fox said to the wolfe, goe you into the riuer, & I shall take heed to the basket. And the wolfe did as the fox had him, and as the wolfe was going within the water, the Fox by his malice filled the basket full of stones, and when the basket was full, the Fox said to the Wolfe: Certainly my Lord, I may no more lift, ne hold the basket so full: for it is full of fish: and the Wolfe weening that the fox had said truth, said, I render thankes to the gods, that once I may see and learne the excellent art of fishing. And then the fox said to him. My Lord, abide you here, and I shall fetch some to helpe vs for to take the fish out of the basket. And in saying these words, the Fox ran into the streete, where he found diuers men, to whom he said in this manner: What doe you here? why stand ye idle? See yonder is the Wolfe which ate your sheepe, your Lambes and your beasts, and now he taketh your fish out of the riuer, and eateth it. And then all the men came together, some with

slings

stings, and some with bowes, and other with staues to the riuer, where they found the wolfe, whom they beat outragiously. And when the poore Wolfe saw himselfe thus oppressed and beaten with strokes, he began with all his strength and might to draw, and supposed to haue carried away the fish, but so strongly he drew, that he pulled his taile from his arse, and very hardly scaped with his life. In the meane time it happened that the Lion which was king ouer all beasts, was sore sicke, and the Wolfe thinking to be quit with the fox, went for to see him as his Lord: And when he came there, hee saluted the Lion, saying vnto him thus: My king I salute you, pleaseth it you to know that I haue gone round about the country and Prouince, and in all places of it, for to seeke medicines profitable for you, for to recouer your health, but nothing haue I found good for your sickneſſe, but onely the skinne of Reynard the fox, fierce proud and malicious, which is to your body medicinall, but he disdaineth to come hither and see you, but ye may call him to counsell, and when he is come, let his skinne be taken from him, and then let him run whither he will; and that faire skin which is so wholesome, yee shall cause it to be bound vpon your body, and within few dates after, it shall make you in as good health as euer you were. And when he had said these words, hee departed from the Lion and took his leaue: but euer he supposed that the fox had heard him, and so he did, for hee was within a tariar nigh vnto the place, where he heard all the proposition of the Wolfe, to the which he did prouide a remedy, and great preseruation: For as some

as the Wolfe was departed from the Lion, the Fox went into the fields, and in the high way he founde a great dunghill, within the which hee put himselfe. And when he supposed himselfe to be defiled and dagled enough, he came thus arrayed vnto the lodge of the Lion, whom he saluted as his soueraigne Lord, saying to him in this manner: Sir King, God giue you good health, and the Lion answered, God saue thee me swete friend, come neere and kisse me, and after I shall tell thee some secret, which I would not that euery one should know. To whom the fox said in this manner, ah sir King be not displeased, for I am foule arrayed and all to dagled, by reason of the great way which I haue gone, seking all about for some good medicine to helpe you, wherefore it behoueth me not to be so neere your person: for the stinke of the dung would grieue your person, and molest the great sickenesse which you haue: but deere Sir, if it please you ere euer I come neere to your royall maiesty, I shall bathe and make me cleane, and then I shall come againe, and present my selfe before thy noble person: notwithstanding all this, let it please thee to wit and know, that I come from all the countries hereabout, and from all the realmes adioyning to this prouince, for to see if I could finde some good medicine needfull for thy sickenesse, and to recouer thy health: but certainely I can finde no better counsell, than the counsell of an ancient Greek with a great long beard, a man of great wisedome and experience, who told me that in this prouince is a wolfe without a taile, the which hath lost his taile by vertue of the medicine that is in him, for the which thing it is very

nædfull and expedient, that ye make this wolfe to come before you, that by him you may recouer your former health: and when he is come, dissemble and call him to counsell, and say that it shall be much for his worship and profit; and as he shall bee nere vnto you, cast vpon him your armed fæt, and as swiftly as ye may, pull the skinne from the body of him, and kæpe it whole, saue only ye shall leaue the head and fæte, and then let him goe his way to sæke his fortune: and forthwith, when yee haue the skinne hot and warme, ye shall bind it about your bodie, and ere long time be passed, your health shall be restored to you againe, and you shall be whole as you were before. And then the Fox toke his leaue of the king, and departed thence againe vnto his tarriar, Some after came the wolfe to see the Lion, and incontinent the Lion called the wolfe to counsell, and fastened softly his foot on him, and dispoiled the wolfe of all his skinne, saue onely his head and fæt, and after the Lion bound it all warme about his bell, and the wolfe ran away skinles, wherefore he had not enough to defend him from the flies, which vexed him very sore, and for the great distresse that he felt because of the Flyes that ate his flesh, hee was wood, and ranne vnder a hill vpon the which the Fox was. And when the Fox saw him hæ began to laugh and mocke at the wolfe, saying aloude, who art thou that passest, there with such a faire hood on thy head? and with right faire gloues on thy hends, and shoes on thy fæte? Stay, stay a while and hearken what I shall say to thee. When thou wentest and camest before the kings house, thou wert blessed of the Lord,

and

and when thou wast at the Court, thou hadst many good words, and good talking of all the world. And therefore my gossip, be it euill or good, thou must let all passe, and haue patience in thine aduersitie. This fable sheweth vnto vs, that if any hurt, or endamaged by some other, he must not auenge himselfe by his tongue for to make any treason, ne for to say of them any harme or blasphemy, for we ought to consider, that whosoeuer maketh the pit readie for his brother, oft it happeth, that he himselfe falleth in the same, and is beaten with the same rod he made for another.

Of the Wolfe which let a fart.

IT is folly to thinke more than a man ought to doe, for whatsoeuer a foole thinketh, it seemeth to him that it shall be so: As it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe, which sometime rose early in the morning, and after he was risen from his couch, he stretched himselfe and let a great fart, and began to say to himselfe, Thanked be the gods for these good tydings, this day I shall be fortunate and happy, as mine arse singeth to me. And then he departed from his lodging, and began to walke abroad. And as he went on his way, he found a sacke full of tallow which a woman had let fall, and with his foot he turned it vpside downe, saying to himselfe, I shall not eat thee, for thou shouldest hurt my tender stomacke, I shall fare this day more delicious and farre better I know it well, for mine arse did sing so to me. And with these words he went his way, and anon after he found a great peece of Bacon well salted, which hee turned vpside downe, and when hee had turned and tossed

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it enough, he said, I disdaine to eat of this meate, because it would make me drinke to much, for it is salt: and as mine arse sang to me lately, I shall eat this day better and more delicious meate: and then he began to walke further, and as he entred into a faire meddow, he saw a Mare and her foale with her, and said to himselfe, I render thanks unto the gods, for the gayneste that they send me, for well I wist, and was certaine, that this day I should find some pretious meate. When he came neere the Mare and said to her. Certainely sister I must eat thy child. And the Mare said, Doe my brother what shall please thee, but first I pray thee doe me one pleasure, I have often heard say, that thou art a good Surgeon, therefore I desire thee that thou wilt helpe my foot, for as I passed yesterday through the forrest, a thorne entred into my foot behinde, which grieveth me very sore, I pray thee therefore before thou eat my foale to pull the same out of my foot. And the Wolfe said, That shall I gladly doe good Sister, shew me thy foot, And as the Mare shewed the Wolfe her foote she gave him such a stroke betwixt the eies, that he was astonied and fell flat to the ground, and by this meanes was her foale saved: and a long time after, was the Wolfe lying upon the earth for dead, and when he was come againe to himselfe, and that hee could speake, he said: I care not for this mishap, for well I wot that yet this day I shall eat and be well filled with delicious meat: and in uttering these words, he lifted up himselfe, and so departed. And having walked a space, he found (by chance) a couple of rams fighting in a meddow, that with their hornes smote

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each other. Then the Wolfe said within himselfe: Blessed be God that now I shall be throughly satisfied. He then came neere the two Rammes and said, Certainly, I shall eat one of you. And one of them said vnto him, My Lord doe all that pleaseth you, but first you must giue vs a sentence of a processe of law which is betwixt vs: And the Wolfe answered, That with right good will he would doe it: And after said vnto them, My Lords tell me your cases, that I may the better giue sentence of your difference and question. And then one of them began to say, My Lord, This meadow was belonging to our Father, and because he died without making any ordinance or testament, we be now in debate and strife for the parting of it: wherefore we pray thee that thou wouldst make an accord betwixt vs, so that peace may be on either side. And then the Wolfe demanded of the Rammes, how their question might be accorded? Right well, said one of them, by the way that I shall tell thee, if thou wilt heare me. We will be at the two ends of the meddow, and thou shalt be in the midst of it, and from the end of the meddow wee both shall run toward you, & he that shall first come to you, shalbe Lord of this meddow, and the last shalbe thine. Well said the Wolfe, Thine aduice is good, and well proposed: Let vs see now who shall come first to me. Then went the two Rams to the end of the meddow, and both at once began to runne toward the Wolfe, and with all their might came and gaue two such vehement strokes, both at once against both his sides, that almost they brake his heart within his belly, and there fell downe the poore Wolfe all astonied, and the

Rams

rams went their way. And when hee was come a-gaine to himselfe, he tooke courage, and departed, saying thus vnto himselfe, Yet shall I this day eat some good dainty meat. He had not long walked but hee found a Sow and her small pigges with her, and incontinent as soone as he saw her he said: Thanks bee to the gods that I shall this day eat and fill my belly with good meat, and shall haue good luck: and in saying that he approached to the Sow, and said to her, My sister, I must eat some of thy young pigges: and the Sow said to him, My Lord, I am content, eat what shall please you, but ere you eat, I pray that they may be baptized, and made cleane in pure and faire water: and the Wolfe said, Shew me the water, and I will wash and baptize them well: then the Sow led him to a riuer where was a faire mill, and as the Wolfe was vpon a little bridge of the said mill, and that he would haue taken a pigge, the Sow thrust the Wolfe into the water with her head, and for the swiftnesse of the water, hee must needs passe vnder the wheele of the said mill, but God knowes whether the wings of the mill did beat him well or not, yet as soone as hee might, hee ranne his way, and as he ran he said to himselfe, I care not for so little shame, sith I shall eat my belly full of delicious meat, as mine arse did sing early to me. And as hee passed through the street he saw some sheepe, and as the Sheepe saw him, they entred into a stable, and when the Wolfe came there, hee said vnto them in this manner, God saue you my sisters, I must eat one of you, to the end that my great hunger may bee fully satisfied. Then said they vnto him, Certainly

my Lord, you are welcome to Masse, for we be comme hither to hold a great solemnitie, and therefore we desire you that you pontifically would sing, and after the Service compleate and finished, do your pleasure with one of vs. The Wolfe for vaine glory, fayning to be a Prelate, began to sing and howle aloud before the Sheepe; and when the men of the towne heard the voyce of the Wolfe, they came into the stable with great staues, and so layd vpon the Wolfe that he could hardly goe: neuertheleſſe, he escaped and went vnder a great tree vpon which tree stood a man that hewed downe the boughes thereof. The wolfe then began to sigh sore, and to make great sorrow for his euill hap and said: Ah Iupiter. How many euils haue I had and escaped? But I know it is long of my ſelfe and by mine owne meanes and proud thoughts; for this day in the morning I found a sacke full of Mallow, which I disdained, and anon after eate a peece of bacon, which I would not eat for feare of great thirſt, and because of ſolish conceit: ſo that the euill that happeneth to me, is rightly beſtowed. My father was neuer Phyſitian, nor Leach, neither haue I euer studied or learned the Science of Phyſicke, therefore if there hapned any euill to me when I would haue drawne the thorne out of the Mares foote, it is well imployed. Alſo my Father was neither patriarke nor biſhop, nor euer knew any letter in the booke, and yet I presumed and take vpon me to doe sacrifice, and to ſing before the gods, fayning my ſelfe a Prelate; but after my deſerning I was well rewarded: alſo my Father was neuer Lawyer nor Iuſtice, and yet I would take vpon

me

me to be a great Justice. But I knew neuer neither A. ne B. and therefore the euill that is come to me is most right. O Iupiter, I am worthy of a very great punishment for my offences. Send thou now to me from thy high throne a sword, or other weapon, wherwith I may strongly punish and beat my selfe by great penance, for well worthy I am to receiue a greater punishment. Now the good man being vpon the tree, and hearing all these words of the Wolfe, said nothing. And when the Wolfe had made an end of his sighings & complaints, the good man toke his axe wherewith he had cut away the dead branches of the tree, and cast it vpon the wolfe, and it fell vpon his backe in such manner, that the Wolfe turned vpside downe with his feete vpward, in such sort that he lay as if he had beene stark dead. And after he was remoued againe, he looked vp toward heauen, and began thus to cry out, Ha Iupiter, I now see well that thou hast heard my prayer. And by earnest looking vp, he espied the man which sate in the tree, and thinking him to be Iupiter, he presently fled toward the forrest as fast as he could being neuer before hurt and wounded: and euer after he became more meeke and humble, than before he was fierce and proud. By this fable men may see, that many things fall out which a foole thinketh not on. And it sheweth to vs, that when any little good hap falleth vnto vs, we ought not to refuse it in hope of better fortune: it likewise sheweth that none are to take vpon them to doe that which they haue no skill to doe.

Of the enuious Dogge.

NO man ought to haue enuy at other mens good fortune, as appeareth by this fable of an enuious dogge which went into a stable of Oxen, because that they should not enter in for to eat of the hay. And then the Oxen said unto him, Thou art euill and peruerse to haue enuy of other mens good, the which is to us needfull and profitable, for thy kind is not to eat hay. And this he did of a great bone which he held in his mouth, he would not leaue it, because of the enuy of another dogge being hard by. This fable therefore teacheth us, that it behoueth euery one to kepe himselfe from the company of an enuious person.

Of the Wolfe and the hungry Dogge.

THere be some that think to winne, which often happen to lose, for it is commonly said, that as much spendeth the niggard as the liberall, as it appeareth by this fable, of a man which had a great flocke of sheepe, and also he had a dogge for to kepe them from the Wolues. To this dogge he gaue no meat for the great auarice that he had, and therefore the Wolfe on a day came to the Dogge, and demanded of him the reason why he was so leane, and said unto him, I see well that thou art ready to starue through hunger, by reason that thy master giueth thee no meat by his scarcity, but if thou wilt beleeue mee, I shall giue thee good counsell. And the Dogge said to him, Certainly I lacke greatly good counsell. Then the Wolfe said to him, This shalt thou doe, Let me take a Lambe, and when I shall haue it, I shall run a-

way,

away, and when thou seest me, make semblance to run after me, and faine thy selfe that thou canst not ouertake me for lacke and default of meat, which maketh thee so feeble. And thus when the Shepheard shall see that thou maiest not run because of thy great feblenesse and debilitie of body, he shall tell thy Lord that thou maiest not recouer the lambe because thou art so leane and hungry, and by this meane thou shalt haue thy belly full of meat. The dogge then accorded with the Wolfe, and each of them did as aboue-said. And when the Shepheard saw the dogge fall, he supposed well that hunger was the cause of it, for the which cause when he came home he told his master, and hee vnderstood it he said as a man wroth for shame, I will that from henceforth you giue him bread enough, and then euery day the same dogge, had sops of bread and drie bread enough, whereby he got strength and vigor againe. It hapned within a while after, that the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge and said to him, I perceiue well that I gaue thee good counsell. And the dogge said to the Wolfe, My Brother thou sayest truth, wherefore I thank thee much, for of it I had great neede. And then the Wolfe said to him, If thou wilt, I shall giue thee yet better counsell. And the Dogge answered him, With a very good will I shall heare it, and if it be good I shall doe after it. Then said the Wolfe to him, Giue me leaue to take another Lambe, and doe thou runne after me for to haue it from me, and to bite me, and I shall violently ouerthrow thee with thy feete vpward as he that hath no puissance and strength, and yet notwithstanding all this, I will not hurt thee

beleeue me hardly, and good shall hap to thee. And when thy maisters seruants shall haue seene thy diligence they shall shew thy master, how that thou shalt keepe full well his fold, if thou be well nourished. And then the dogge answered the wolfe, that he was content. And as it was said, right so it was done, and both of them made good diligence: the wolfe ranne away with the Lamb and the dogge ran after and ouertooke him, and bit him faintly, and the Wolfe ouerthrew the Dogge vpside downe to the ground. And when the Shepheard saw the Wolfe giue such strokes vpon the Dogge, the Shepheard said certainely we haue a good dogge, we must tell his diligence to our master, and how he bit the wolfe, and how he was ouerthrowne, and yet said certainly, if he had euer meat enough, the wolfe had not borne away the Lambe. Then the Lord commanded to giue him plenty of meat, whereof the dogge took againe all his strength: And within a while, after the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge, and said vnto him in this manner, My brother, haue I not giuen to thee good counsell? And the dogge said, Certainely thou hast, for which I thanke thee. Then the Wolfe said to the Dog, I pray thee my brother, that thou wilt yet giue me another Lambe. And the dog said to him, Certainly my brother it may suffice thee to haue had two of them. Then said the wolfe, at the least thou must let me haue on for my labour and salary. What shalt thou not, said the Dogge shalt thou not haue good salarie for to haue had two Lambes of my maisters? And the wolfe answered to him againe, My brother, giue it me if it please

thee

thee. And the Dogge said, Nay I will not, and if thou takest it against my will, I promise thee, that neuer after this time thou shalt eat any more. And the Wolfe said, Alas my brother, I dye for hunger, tell me for Gods loue what I shall doe. Then the dogge said to him. I shall confesse thee well; a wall of my maisters celler is fallen downe, goe thou thither this night and enter into it, & there thou maiest both eat and drinke at thy pleasure, for both bread, flesh and wine shalt thou finde there in great plenty. Then the wolfe said to the dogge, Alas my brother, beware I pray thee that thou accuse me not, ne deceiue me. And the dogge answered I warrant thee, but loke thou doe thy feat so priuily that none of my fellowes know of it. And the wolfe came at night and entred into the celler, and ate and dranke, at his pleasure, insomuch that he wared drunke, and when he was drunke he said to himselfe; When the villaines bee filled with meates, and that they be drunke, they sing, and wherefore should not I sing? And anon he began to cry and houle. Then the dogges heard his voice and began to barke and howle, and the seruants which heard them said, It is surely the Wolfe which is entred within the celler, and they altogether went thither and killed the Wolfe. Wherefore, more dispendeth the niggard than the bountifull, for couetousnesse was neuer good; for many there be which dare not eat and drinke as nature requireth, but nethelesse, euery one ought to liue prudently, of all such goods as pleaseth God to send them. This fable sheweth also to vs, that no ne ought to doe against his kind, as the Wolfe, which wared drunke, for the

which

which cause he was slaine.

Of the Father and his three children.

HE is not wise which for to haue vanitie and his pleasure, maketh debate and strife: As it appeares by this fable. There was a man which had three children, and at the houre of death he bequeathed and gaue them his heritage, that is to wit, a Peare tree, a Goat and a Mill. And when the father was dead, the brethren assembled themselues together and went before the Iudge, for to part the liuelyhood, and said to the Iudge, My Lord, Our Father is dead and hath bequeathed vnto vs three Brethren all his heritage, and one should haue as much of it as the other. And then the Iudge demanded what was their liuelyhoode: And they answered: A Peartree, a Goate and a Mill. And then the Iudge said to them, That he that should sit and deuide equall your parts, for the one to haue as much of it as another, should haue a very hard matter to doe, but by your owne aduice how would you haue it? and then the eldest of the three brethren spake and said, I shall take from the Peartree all that is crooked and right, and the second said, I shall take from the Peartree, all that is greene and dry. And the third said, I shall haue all the rote, the pill or mast, and all the branches of the Peartree. And the Iudge said to them, He that then shall haue the most part of it, let him be Iudge, for neither I nor any else can vnderstand or know who shall thereby haue the most or least part of it, and therefore he that can proue openly, that hee hath the most part, shall be the lord of the whole tree. Then the Iudge demanded of them, how their fa-

ther

ther had demised to them the Goate: and they said to him, He that shall make fairest prayer and request must have the Goat. And then the first brother made his request and said, would God that the Goate were now so great, that he might drinke all the water which is under the cope of heaven, and when he had drunke it, he should be yet more thirstie. The second said, I suppose that the Goate shall be mine, for a fairer demand and request than thine is I shall now make: I would that all the Hempe and Flaxe, and all the wooll in the world were made into one thred alone, and that the goate were so great, that with the same thred men might not binde one of the legges. Then said the third. The Goate shall surely bee mine, for I would that he were so great, that if an Eagle were at the uppermost part of heaven, hee might occupie and have there as much place as the Eagle might looke on in height, length and breadth. And then the Judge said, which of you three have made the fairest prayer, Certainely neither I nor any other can give the judgement, and therefore the Goate shall bee to him that of it shall say the truth. And the Will, how was it demised by your Father to be parted among you three? They answered the Judge, He that shall be the most lyar, most cruill, and most slow, ought to have it. Then said the eldest sonne: I am most slothfull, for many yeares past I have dwelled in a great house, and lay under the condits of the same, where fell upon me all the foule waters: as pisse, dish-water, and other filth, that most wonderfully stanke, insomuch that all my flesh was rotten thereof and mine eyes blind, and the durt under my backe was a

a foot high, and yet by sloth I had rather abide there than to rise vp. The second said, Suppose that the Mill shall be mine, for if I came to a table couered with all manner of delicate meats whereof I might eat if I would take of the best, I am so slothfull that I may not eat, without one should put the meat in my mouth. The third said, The Mill shall be mine, for I am yet a greater lyar, and more slothfull than any of you both, for if I had thirst vnto the death, and if I found then my selfe within a faire water vp to the necke I would rather die than moone my selfe to drinke one drop thereof. Then said the Judge. Yee wot not what yee say, for neither I, nor any other may well vnderstand you, but the cause I remit among you. And thus they went without any sentence, for to a foolish demand, belongeth a foolish answer; and therefore they be fooles that will plead in such sort one against another, for to a small matter belongeth a small plea.

Of the Wolfe and the Fox.

NOne may be master, except first he haue beene a disciple. As it appeareth by this fable of a fox which came to a wolfe, and said to him, My Lord, I pray ye that ye will be my gossip. And the wolfe answered, I am content. And the fox tooke him his son, praying him that he should learne his sonne good doctrine, the which the wolfe tooke, and went with him vpon a mountaine, and said to the little Fox, when the beasts come to the field, call me. And the Fox went and sam from the top of a high hill how all the beasts were comming to the field, wherefore he called his Godfather and said, My Godfather, the

beasts

beasts come into the field. And the Wolfe demaunded of him what beasts they were. The Fox answered, There be both kin and swine together. Well said the Wolfe, I car not for them, let them goe, for the Dogs be with them. Soon after the Fox looked on the other side, and perceiued a Mare which went to the fields, and he went to his Godfather and said, Godfather, a Mare is gone to the fields. And the Wolfe demanded of him, whereabout is shee? and the Fox answered, she is by the forrest: and the Wolfe said, now goe we to dinner: and the Wolfe with his godson went into the Forrest, and came to the Mare and perceiued a young Colt by her. Then the Wolfe tooke the Colt by the necke, and drew him into the wood, and deuoured him betwæne them both: and when they had well eaten, the godsonne said to the godfather, My Godfather, I commend you to God, and much I thanke you for your good doctrine, for ye haue taught me well, insomuch that now I am a great clerk, and now I will goe to my mother. Then the Wolfe said to his godsonne, My godsonne, if thou goest away, thou shalt repent thee, for thou hast not yet still studied, neither knowest thou yet thy syllogismes. Ha my good godfather, said the Fox, I know well all. Then the Wolfe said to him, Sith thou wilt needs goe, to God I commend thee. And when the Fox was come to his mother, she said to him, surely thou hast not studied enough, and then he said to his mother, I am so great a Clerke, that I can cast the dwell from the cliff. Come let us goe chase, and goe shall so whether I can doe ought or nought. And the young Fox would haue done as his godfather the

Wolfe

tydings worthy and profitable for us? and then the Cocke full of malice answered to him, Nay verily gossip, but I pray thee tell them vnto vs. Then said the Fox to the Cocke. Certainely gossip, they be the best that euer ye heard, for ye may goe and talke and commune among all beasts without any harme or damage, and they shall doe you both pleasure and all service to them possible. For thus it is concluded and also confirmed by the great councell of Beasts, that none be so hardy, to doe or let in any wise none other, be it neuer so little a beast: for the which good tydings, I pray thee that thou wilt come downe, to the end that we may sing Te Deum Laudamus for, ioy. Wel the Cocke knowing well the falsnesse of the Fox, replied in this manner. Certainely my brother and good friend, thou hast brought vnto me right good tydings, whereof more than a hundred times I thanke thee: and saying these words, the Cocke lift vp his necke and lokt farre from him and the Fox said, What gossip, whereabout lookest thou? And the Cocke said, Certainely my Brother, I see a couple of Dogges comming hither with open mouth, which as I suppose, come for to bring vs the tydings thou hast told vs. And then the Fox shoke for feare of the dogges, and said to the Cocke, God be with you my friend, it is time that I depart hence before the dogges come neerer: and saying these words, he ran away as fast as he might; and then the Cocke cryed after him, saying: Gossip, why runnest thou thus? if the peace be accorded, thou oughtest to doubt nothing. Ha gossip, said the Fox, I doubt that these two dogs haue not heard of the de-

cres

crie of the peace. And thus when a beguiler is beguiled, he receiueth the salarie or paiment which he ought to haue. Wherefore let euery man keepe himselfe there-from.

POgius rehearseth, that there were two women in Rome which he knew of diuers age and forme: which came to the Curtisan to get somewhat for their bodies, whom he receiued, and it happened, that he knew the fairest of them both twice, and the other once, and so departed. Afterward when they should depart he gaue to them a piece of cloth, not telling how much each of them should haue for their part: and in parting of the said cloth, there fell betweene the women a strife, because one of them demanded two parts, after the exigence of her worke, and the other the halfe, each of them shewing their reasons, the one saying, that she had suffered him twice to doe his pleasure, and the other pretended that she was ready, and in her was no default, and so from brawling they fell to fighting. And their husbands not knowing the cause of their strife, each of them defended his wiues cause; from the fighting of the women, it came to their husbands, with buffets & casting of stones, so long that men ran betweene them, and after the custome of Rome, both the husbands were brought to prison, bearing emnitie each to other, and not knowing wherefore. The said cloth was put into the hands of women secretly, and not parted. but it was secretly argued among the women how it would be parted: and they demanded of Doctors what was the law of it. He saith also that a

Merchant of Florence bought a horse of a man, and made his consent with the seller for iiij. Ducats, for to pay forthwith in hand iij. Ducats, and for the rest he would become his debter, and the seller was content, and thereupon deliuered the horse, and received iij. Ducats. And a while after, the seller demanded of the buyer the residue. And he denied the payment, and bad him hold his couenant, for, said the buyer, wee accorded that I should be thy debter, and if I should satisfie and pay, I should no more be thy debter.

HEE telleth vs also that there was a Carrike of Jene hired into France, for to make warre against the Englishmen, the which Carrike a gentleman of France beheld and saw, and said hee would be auenged on him that bare his armes: wherupon arose an alteration, insomuch that the Frenchman prouoked the Genoes to battaile: the Genoes accepted the prouocation, & came at the day assigned into the field, without any array or habilements of warre, and the Frenchman came well appointed into the field. And then the patron of the Carrike said, Wherefore is it that we two should fight this day and make battaile? Because, said the other, that thine armes bee mine, and belonged to me before thou hadst them. Then the Genoes said, It is no nede to make any battaile therefore, for the armes that I beare, is not the head of an Ore, but it is the head of a cow. Which thing so spoken, the noble frenchman was abashed, and so departed halfe mocked.

Also

ALso he saith, that there was a Physition dwelling in a Citie, which was a cunning man in that Science, and had a servant, a young man, that made pilles, after a certaine forme that he had shewed vnto him: and when this young man had dwelled long with him, and could perfectly make the pilles, he departed from his Master, and went into a strange Countrie where he was not knowne, letting them vnderstand that he was a cunning Phisition, and could give Medicines for all kind of diseases, and ministred alwaies his pilles to every man that came to him for remedie. It happened so, that a poore man of that place where he was, came to him, and complained, how he had lost his Asse, and praied him to giue him a medicine to finde his Asse againe; and he gaue vnto him the pilles, and bade him to receiue and take them, and he should find his Asse. And the poore man did so, and after went into the fields and pastures to looke after his Asse, and in so doing, the pils wrought so in his belly, that he must néeds goe purge him, and went among the reeds, and there eased him, and there anon he found his Asse; whereof he being very ioyfull, ranne into the towne, and declared that by the medicine that he had receiued of the Physition, hée had found his Asse. Which thing knowne, all the simple people reputed him a very cunning man, albeit he could doe nothing but make pils. And thus many folkes are oft-times taken for wise and cunning, for he was reputed not only to heale all kinde of sicknesses, but also to giue medicines to find Asses after they were lost.

There was in a certaine towne a Widdower that wowed a Widdow, to haue her to his Wife, & at the last they were agreed and sure together. And whem a young woman being seruant with the said Widdow heard thereof, she came to her Mistresse and said to her, Alas Mistresse, what haue you done? Why, said the Mistresse? I haue heard say, said the Maid, that he is a perillous man, for he lay so oft, and knew so much his other wife, that shee died thereof, and I am sorry thereof that you should fall into the like case. To whom the Widdow answered and said: Certainely I desire to die, for here is nothing but sorrow and care in this world.

This was a courteous excuse of the Widdow.

FINIS.

The Table of the Life and pleaſant Fables of *Eſop* and ſo forth of *Anian*, *Alfonce*, and *Poge* the Florentine.

How *Eſop* excuſed him before his Lord for eating of the Figges. fola.

How the Goddeſſe of Hoſpitalitie gaue ſpeech of tongue to *Eſop*, and how he was ſold. 5

How *Eſop* deceiued his fellowes by taking the lighter burden, which ſeemed to them the heauieſt. 7

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How *Exantus* brought Eſop into a Garden. 14

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How *Eſop* made his Lady come home againe. 18

How *Exantus* ſent *Eſop* to the market to buy of the beſt meate that he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues. 19

How *Eſop* found one that cared for nothing, & brought him home to his Maſter. 21

How *Eſop* anſwered his Maſter. 24

How *Exantus* promiſed to drinke all the water in the Sea. 25

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